LA ANTORCHA

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¡Minneapolis se Rebela!

CUANDO la bola de boleo rompió la ventana de la Estación de Reclutamiento de las Fuerzas Armadas se escuchó un grito de alegría. La gente sentía su poder en las calles. Ellos dirigían su furia en contra de blancos que representaban su falta de poder.

Cuando EU envió a 32.000 tropas a Honduras el 16 de marzo, ello desató una nueva resistencia en contra de la guerra en Centroamérica. A lo largo del país la gente se lanzó a las calles para romper con las cosas de costumbre de todos los días. En Minneapolis el nivel de resistencia aumentó grandemente. Los eventos en Minneapolis son importantes para el movimiento antiguerra del país porque son una indicación de las cosas que se avecinan si ocurren escalaciones futuras de la guerra.

El miércoles, la Plegaria de Resistencia llamó a una manifestación para el día siguiente en contra de la consideración de Reagan de desplegar tropas. Cuando se hizo del conocimiento de que tropas estaban siendo enviadas, la gente ya estaban en moción organizándose para obstruir el tráfico en las intersecciones más traficadas de Hennepin y Lake durante las horas de apuro el jueves. La acción fue copatrocinada por Mujeres Contra Locura Militar (WAMM). Muchas otras organizaciones se organizaron para la acción incluyendo la Organización Progresista de Estudiantes (PSO) y la Liga Anarquista Revolucionaria de Boleo (Revolutionary Anarchist Bowling League—RABL—más o menos "el populacho" en inglés).

La participación en la acción fue sorprendentemente grande con un número de al menos 500 personas acudiendo a la intersección. El nivel de furia y el número de gente lo hizo claro. Esto no sería una manifestación ordinario. Los cantos eran más elevados que de costumbre: "¡1-2-3-4, No queremos su guerra chingada, 5-6-7-8, Ahora vamos a luchar en contra!" "¡No Guerra, No KKK, No al fascista EUA!" y el rítmico "¡EU fuera de Honduras!" Los carros de la policía fueron apedreados con bombas de pintura y se escribió grafito

Traducido de RABL Rouser, publicado por la Liga de Boleo Anarquista Revolucionaria.

dondequiera que se podía. Una bandera de EU fue incendiada. Cuando la multitud se reunió alrededor de un carro de la policía con la intención de darle vuelta, la policía dejó el área. El área fue declarada "Zona Liberada," y barricadas de cajas de periódicos, bancas de buses y basureros en fuego se lanzaron a la calle.

Mientras que la multitud era diversa e incluía toda clase de grupos antiguerra el papel decisivo de jóvenes no afiliados era muy aparente. "Punks" y "skinheads" progresistas eran muy visibles como nueva fuerza, pero la juventud en general se lanzó como una fuerza que no se ha visto en muchos años. Un carro cubierto con mantas pro contra se le rompieron todas las ventanas. Los jóvenes fueron los que prepararon las barricadas y la defenza de la manifestación cuando llegó la policía.

El espíritu de la manifestación fue de desafió festivo. Mientras que unas gentes se quedaban en las barricadas, otras bailaban al ritmo de tamborines y flautas y a la percusión de basureros, cajas de periódicos y otros objetos. Cuando se puso el sol, las llamas de los basureros iluminaban la intersección mejor que las luces de las calles.

Después de un par de horas, la policía de motines se agrupaba en masa haciendo una pared en la intersección de la calle 31 y la Avenida Hennepin. Con palos, yelmos, bombas de gas y perros, la policía ordenaba a la gente a que se retiraran del área o que ellos empezarían a hacerlo haciendo uso de fuerzo. En una reunión de masa en la calle, se decidió el apoderarse de la calle. Piedras, botellas, y garrotes fueron recogidos y se fortificó la barricada.

Cuando se oyó decir de que la policía quería que las mujeres de WAMM se retiraran antes de que ellos empezaran a actuar, los miembros de WAMM se unieron de las manos y se ubicaron en

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Crisis Amenaza Nicaragua

MIENTRAS que la estrategia de los sandinistas de dividir y derrotar a la insurgencia contra está consiguiendo su propósito, una crisis económica terrible dentro del país está impeliendo a los obreros y otra gente oprimida a luchar contra el régimen sandinista.

En la tarde del 23 de marzo, líderes de los sandinistas y de la "contra" contrarrevolución afirmaron un cese de fuego y consintieron a empezar negociaciones dirigidas al llegar a un arreglo político. El liderato contra, dándose cuenta de que la clase gobernante le han abandonado, decidieron que el solo curso realístico que le quedaba era de buscar un arreglo con sus enemigos. Cualquiera que haya sido el intento original de los sandinistas, su decisión de aceptar el cese de fuego y de empezar (y dilitar) negociaciones con los contras ha resultado en amargas luchas internas dentro de los contras las cuales puedan resultar en un sismo y el fracaso de los contras como una amenaza militar significante.

Más que conflictos personales, los asuntos en el conflicto interno no son claros. De las cuentas en la prensa burguesa, parece que el líder contra más derechista (y el hombre de la CIA), Adolfo Calero, piensa que los contras deben intentar de extender las negociaciones. El apostaría por una victoria de los republicanos en las elecciones presidenciales en EU en noviembre, la cual, el espera, resultaría en un recomienzo de ayuda militar y una reasunción de la insurgencia contra.

Otros líderes, más moderados, como Alfredo César, quieren proseguir una estrategia más seria de negociar.

En un esfuerzo de aumentar su influencia, parece que Calero ha apoyado a comandantes de campaña quienes son hostiles al jefe militar supremo de los contras, Enrique Bermudez. Acusan a Bermudez con el proveer dirección inepta tan como ser corrupto (ambas acusaciones son indubitablemente verdad). Tan reciente como la semana pasada, un comandante de campaña clave de los contras amotinó con apróximadamente 2.000 tropas a un campo contra ciertas de José de Yamales, en Honduras, 20 millas de la frontera nicaragüense, en un atento de derribar a Bermudez y sus compinches.

Un fracaso de la insurgencia contra, la cual la CIA organizó en 1982, solomente se puede ver como una cosa buena. Representaría una derrota tremenda para el imperialismo yanquí y una victoria del pueblo nicaragüense.

De la misma importancia, se espera que dará un impulso a la lucha de clase dentro de Nicaragua misma. Como un resultado de la guerra prolongada, del embargo económico de Nicaragua por

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Minneapolis

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medio del cuerpo principal de la manifestación y la policía. Cuando la policía ofreció el arrestar a aquellos que deseaban hacer punto en "Honeywell style" en referencia a las acciones de desobediencia civil de Honeywell, la multitud estalló en risa e hizo burla de la policía. El área todavía se mantuvo por cuatro horas a pesar de las advertencias de la policía. Cuando la temperatura se hacía más fría (todavía hay mucho frío en Minnesota) la multitud comenzó a desaparecer. Otra reunión de masa decidió retirarse del área y regresar a las 4:30 p.m. el siguiente día. En este momento la multitud se dirigió hacia la policía la cual comenzó a retirarse mientras que unas cuantas piedras y botellas se les tiraban a ellos. La multitud se dispersó al los alrededores del área residencial del área mientras que solamente tres eran arrestados en la noche, todos ellos eran jóvenes.

Dirigiendo nuestra furia

El siguiente día lo repetimos otra vez. A las 4:30 p.m. el viernes la gente comenzó a reunirse otra vez en Lake y Hennepin. La multitud era más grande y más joven. La prensa había estado mintiendo todo el día diciéndole a la gente que WAMM estaba pidiéndole a la gente que no regresaran. Sin embargo, muchos de los miembros de WAMM acudieron. KFAI, una estación de radio controlada por la comunidad, había estado publicando la acción todo el día. La multitud creció a acerca de mil mientras que las calles estaban siendo ocupadas por una segunda vez. La policía mantuvo su distancia. A las 6:00 p.m. la gente votó abrumadoramente en favor de marchar 13 bloques a una Estación de Reclutamiento de las Fuerzas Armadas en la calle Lake para dirigir su enojo a un blanco más apropriado.

La marcha llenó cuatro bloques de la calle sin ser molestada por la policía. Una vez que todos se habían reunido en la Estación de Reclutamiento, ésta fue inmediatamente colmada de basura. Se tiraron bombas de pintura y huevos. Las paredes fueron pintadas con pintura de spray. Finalmente cuatro ventanas y una puerta fueron quebradas con piedras, ladrillos y al menos una bola de bolear. *(¡Golpe!)* Una candela romana detonó dentro de la Estación de Reclutamiento y una bandera fue incendiada por un reservista de la marina. Después, la multitud regresó a Lake y Hennepin.

Otra reunión de masa tuvo lugar en la calle. Se decidió de que diferencias tácticas no interferirían en la defensa física de los participantes en la acción en caso de arresto. La manifestación desaparecería al dispersarse en grupos grandes. La siguiente manifestación tendría lugar el lunes a las 4:30 p.m. en Hennepin y Washington en el centro de Minneapolis. Varios cientos de gentes marcharon de Lake y Hennepin a Franklin y Hennepin donde ellos obstruyeron el tráfico y luego se dispersaron.

En un atento a explicar la falla de la policía de hacer arrestos o la inabilidad de parar la tira de basura, un policía citado en la prensa dijo: "los anarquistas están mejor organizados que nosotros." Aunque nosotros deseamos que así fuera, nosotros no nos dejamos que nos llevara a demasiada confianza mientras que nos preparabamos para el lunes.

Durante el fin de semana hubo organización desenfrenada. Se organizó una coalición para parar la guerra incluyendo a Lesbianas por Paz y Justicia, la Plegaria, PSO, RABL, el Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (SWP), WAMM, la Alianza de Juventud Socialista (YSA). La coalición se unía alrededor de tres principios de acción: no iniciar confrontación con la policía, no acción directa que no era directamente relacionada con parar la guerra y no cooperación con la prensa, la policía o atentos provocadores a sembrar divisiones en el movimiento. También se decidió el marchar en el nuevo Edificio Federal. Este tipo de unidad nunca se podría haber alcanzado antes. La experiencia en la calle había puesto nuevo ánimo en muchos de los grupos.

Durante el fin de semana también se vió un aumento en el nivel de represión el cual se hizo más visible el lunes. El viernes en la noche después de haber tirado basura en la Estación de Reclutamiento hubo un atento a destruir Back Room Anarchist Books (un centro y librería anarquista en Minneapolis). Los cuatro quemadores de la estufa fueron prendidos a todo volumen y se había apagado el piloto. Cuando la gente regresó a la librería se vió que estaba llena de gas el cual pudo haber incendiado con un cigarillo, el movimiento del interruptor o un cable eléctrico en mala condición. El sábado en la noche tres disparos fueron lanzados a las oficinas de WAMM.

Manifestantes atacan el Centro de Reclutamiento de la Fuerzas Armadas, despedazando vidrios con piedras, ladrillos, y bolas de boleo. Momentos después, un maniquí de la marina de guerra se destruyó, y un reservista quemó una bandera de EU y la arrojó dentro del edificio.

El imperio devuelve un golpe

El lunes la policía dijo por los medios de comunicación que ellos responderían de una forma fuerte en contra de la manifestación. Policía de motines fueron visiblemente desplegados para proteger el Edificio Federal. A las 4:30 p.m. la gente se reunió en la intersección del centro la cual se llenó rápidamente. El tráfico fue obstruido. La manifestación comenzó a marchar a lo largo de la Avenida Washington en la dirección del Edificio Federal viejo. Una pared de policía de motines obstruyó Washington. La multitud se dirigío a la derecha hacia el nuevo Edificio Federal pero la policía ya se había tomado el carro que contenía el sistema de sonido y su piloto.

En el nuevo Edificio Federal la gente llenó la calle y atentó a entrar en el edificio. Tan pronto como la policía había asegurado el edificio la gente comenzó a quebrar los vidrios de las puertas. Inmediatamente apareció la policía de motines y obstruyó la calle. La gente formó una línea para enfrentarlos. Mientras que la policía se acercaba, la gente se sentó. No se paró a la policía cuando ellos se acercaban dando palizas, dando patadas y arrestando a la gente. Este nivel de brutalidad fue nuevo para muchos de los manifestantes. Las cámaras de la prensa fueron quebradas. Un reportero fue atacado por un perro de policía. Jóvenes punk fueron seleccionados para ser atacados. Padres y niños fueron arrestados juntamente. Finalmente la gente fue dispersada en pequeños grupos en las aceras. Casi tan pronto como empezó el alboroto policía se terminó.

Los grupos que habían sido separado se agruparon nuevamente de una forma estratégica y se retiraron del área, marchando en la dirección de Nicollet Mall a la Peavey Plaza en donde se sostuvo otra reunión de masa. Se decidió que se dispersaría y que se regresaría a la Peavey Plaza el jueves a las 4:30 p.m. WAMM llamó a una manifestación sin violencia el miércoles en la oficina del senador Dave Durenberger en el centro de Minneapolis. Mucha gente se dispersó pero unos dos cientos marcharon en el edificio de tribunales para sacar a las hermanas y hermanos que habían sido arrestados. Después de entrar en el edificio de tribunales, los manifestantes fueron rodeados por la policía otra vez la cual les ordenó inmediatamente a que se salieron y comenzó a pegarles, dando palizas y haciendo más arrestos. Una puerta de vidrio fue quebrada en la cárcel por la multitud.

Un poco más tarde esa noche, cuando la gente salía de los hospitales y algunos de los organizadores se dirigían a casas de refugio, la coalición sostuvo una con-

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En Managua, policías sandinistas arrestan a trabajadores de construcción quienes se iban en huelga.

Nicaragua

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parte de EU, tan como la maladministración sandinista, la económia nicaragüense está en una condición terrible. La inflación corre fuera de contral y hay escaseces severos de necisadades esenciales. Como hacen élites dirigientes por todo el mundo, las sandinistas han buscado de tratar eses problemas por atacar aun más la nivel de vida de la clase trabajadora y los compesinos. Esto culminó en una devaluación drástica de la moneda nicaragüense la cual levantó los precios aun más.

Un resultado desafortunado de todo esto es el crear de una base política para las fuerzas conservadores burguesas en el país. Aprovechando a la oportunidad de una apertura política ofrecida por las sandinistas como parte del trato regional de paz afirmado el año pasado, 14 partidos de oposición han formado un frente unido que incluye a líderes de negocios muy derechistas tan como corrientes más moderadas. ¡También incluye el pro Moscú Partido Socialista de Nicaragua y un grupo semimaoista, el Partido Comunista de Nicaragua!

Pero la verdadera amenaza a los sandinistas viene de los obreros y otra gente pobre, quienes están empezando a luchar por sus derechos y necesidades. En marzo, trabajadores de construcción y otros trabajadores se echaron en huelga para protestar cortes en salarios. Los sandinistas despidieron a todos y han asaltado sus manifestaciones.

Aparte de los horrores de la guerra, la crisis económica y la represión política, probablemente la mayora tragedia de la situación actual en Nicaragua es la que el resultado mayor de la política de EU y las acciones de los sandinistas es el de haber convertido a numerosos trabajadores y otra gente pobre nicargüenses en apoyadores de los capitalistas derechistas, quienes son los que son últimadamente responsables por la situación desastrosa en la gente trabajadora se encuentran.

Un Examen del Leninismo —

Quinta Parte / Segunda Mitad

La Idiosincracia del Bolchevismo

(Este es el quinto capítulo de una serie de artículos sobre el leninismo/ bolchevismo escrita por Ron Taber. Estos artículos no representan necesariamente la posición oficial de la liga socialista revolucionaria.)

Por RON TABER

TAL COMO lo hemos dicho antes, una de las fuentes de la dedicación bolchevique al centralismo es la creencia de que la tecnología burguesa es inherentemente progresista. La tecnología burguesa y su corolario, industrialización, eran prácticamente objetos de culto por parte de los bolcheviques.

Aunque ellos se oponían fuertemente al capitalismo tradicional, a las corporaciones capitalistas, a los bancos y a los capitalistas de una forma individual, los bolcheviques eran muy adeptos a la tecnología burguesa, particularmente las técnicas de la industria capitalista.

Pero su apego no se limitaba únicamente al proceso industrial como tal—sino que a los métodos en general y aun a las estructuras de la industria capitalista. Esto incluía la centralización, la estructura jerárquica de gerencia, trabajo por obra y otras facetas de "gerencia científica" (e.g., el taylorismo).

Lenin creía que la estructura y los métodos generales de la industria capitalista era algo de lo cual se podía hacer uso, en su totalidad, por un estado proletario. Para Lenin, lo que importaba para hacer tal tipo de estructura proletaria era que estuviese controlada por un estado basado en soviets. Así, en mayo de 1918, él escribió:

> Aquí (en Alemania) tenemos "la última palabra" en ingeniería capitalista moderna de larga escala y de organización planeada, *subordinada al imperialismo burgués junker.* Eliminenos las palabras en bastardillas y en lugar del *estado* junker, burgués, pongamos *también un estado* pero de tipo social diferente, de un contenido de clase diferente—un estado soviético, es decir, un estado proletario, y tendremos la suma total de las condiciones necesarias para el socialismo. ("Niñería Izquierdista y la Mentalidad Pequeño-Burguesa" *Obras Coleccionadas*, Vol. 27, p. 334.)

(Vale la pena mencionar que muchos de los argumentos en los artículos de Lenin y en los discursos que hemos mencionado, así como otros de ese mismo período, eran dirigidos a refutar a aquellos dentro y fuera del partido bolchevique que estaba en desacuerdo con el curso que Lenin proponía. Esto es una indicación de que no todos los bolcheviques estaban de acuerdo con Lenin, y que aspectos específicos de la idiosincracia bolchevique que hemos estado discutiendo no encierran la suma total del bolchevismo.)

Lenin no se daba cuenta de que la técnica industrial, los métodos y la estructura organizativa no eran cuestiones puramente científicas, políticamente neutral; él no se enteraba que ellos tenían un contenido de clase definitivo. Específicamente Lenin no se daba cuenta de que la industria alemana, y que la industria capitalista como tal, de este tiempo, era enteramente una institución burguesa en todo aspecto. El simplemente subordinar un aparato capitalista económico a

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ferencia de prensa donde el ataque de la policía fue denunciado.

El día siguiente WAMM retiró su patrocinamiento de la Coalición por la razón de que no apoyaba destrucción de propiedad. La prensa hizo todo lo que pudo para hacer uso de estas divisiones. Pero la reunión de la coalición esa noche atrajo a muchísima gente, con la participación visible del Comité en Solidaridad con el Pueblo de El Salvador (CISPES), y otros grupos nuevos.

La manifestación de WAMM del miércoles atrajo a unos cuantos cientos de gentes en un día de sol en la oficina de Durenberger sin ningún incidente.

Continuar rodando la bola

El jueves llovió todo el día. Cuando los marciales se reunían antes de la acción la posibilidad de cancelar la acción si había poca participación fue discutida de una forma seria. Más de 500 personas acudieron a la manifestación. Cientos de policías de los dos ciudades de Minneapolis and St. Paul fueron desplegados a pocos bloques de la manifestación. La manifestación reclamó el derecho a tomarse la calle y marchó pasando por el nuevo Edificio Federal obstruyendo el tráfico en las horas de apuro a través del centro. A lo largo de la marcha, policías secretos fueron descubiertos y tirados fuera de la multitud con consignas "los policías son contras también."

Durante toda la semana la policía llevó a cabo una campaña de arrestos y terror en contra de los punks, skins y otros jóvenes. Los jóvenes fueron seleccionados sistemáticamente y acusados de delitos pequeños. Otros fueron simplemente golpeados. La policía le quebró el brazo a una mujer que había sido visible durante la manifestación.

El domingo al menos 2.000 personas acudieron a la manifestación anual de la Semana Centroamericana para una reunión en el Palacio del Estado en St. Paul y una marcha a la basílica cercana. La manifestación tuvo lugar sin ningún incidente. Esto marcó el final de lo que se le llamó el levantamiento.

Existe la tentación de enfatizar la naturaleza de eventos tales como el levantamiento, el generalizar una experiencia local en todo el país. Pero vivimos en un período que se ha caracterizado por pasividad pública a la luz de actos ultrajosos por aquellos en poder. El levantamiento fue una ruptura con tal pasividad. Ello es especialmente importante para los anarquistas debido al papel sobresaliente que ellos jugaron en el levantamiento.

Cuando las tropas regresaban de Honduras, la atención fue dirigida a la ley de ayuda "humanitaria" ante el Congreso. Un número de factores contribuyeron a la caída en el nivel de resistencia en este punto. Cansancio y demandas de trabajo después de seis manifestaciones grandes en once días hizo que la gente se detuviera. Las escuelas secundarias habían hizo difícil el llegar a masas de jóvenes que habían participado la semana anterior. La confusión política sobre ayuda

"humanitaria" en vista del acuerdo contra-sandinista inmobilizó a mucha gente. Finalmente, los medios de comunicación hicieron silencio completo de la ley de ayuda de los contras disuadiendo bastante de la oposición popular de la ayuda a los contras en toda forma. A pesar de estas manifestaciones vivas siguió el voto del Senado y la Cámara de Representantes. Después del voto de la Cámara de Representantes una manifestación marchó del armería de ROTC en la Universidad de Minnesota a una Estación de Reclutamiento cercana la cual fue apedriada con huevos. Después del voto del Senado hubo una reunión de masa en Loring Park en el centro de Minneapolis.

El levantamiento transformó el movimiento antiguerra en las Ciudades Gemelas. Mientras que la militancia del levantamiento decaía, se estaba tratando de decir: nosotros traeremos la guerra a casa. No estamos contentos con simplemente registrar nuestra oposición a la guerra, estamos determinados a pararla. Con toda escalación de guerra, nosotros escalaremos la resistencia a ello también. Estos cambios han sido dolorosos para muchos en el movimiento. Es muy vital el respetar las preocupaciones de aquellos que están acostumbrados a formas más seguras de protesta sin comprometer el movimiento de lucha que está naciendo. El espíritu de lucha de los estudiantes, la juventud y los anarquistas ha terminado con las barreras de protesta de costumbre por completo. □

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Idiosincracia del Bolchevismo

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los soviets (asumiendo que los soviets eran controlados por los obreros) no constituye automáticamente el aparato proletario. Ello tiene que ser completamente revolucionado por los obreros mismos.

Es fácil de entender el porque los bolcheviques creían que la industria burgués era progresista en si misma. A partir de su posición con respecto a la Rusia tsarista, el problema principal era la pobreza, ignorancia, enfermedad, etc., de los obreros y de los campesinos. Y esto, les parecía a ellos, era causado primariamente por la falta de progreso económico, político y cultural de Rusia. Dentro de este contexto, la tecnología capitalista y las técnicas de gerencia capitalistas, etc., eran facilmente tomadas como progresistas *per se*. Lo que Rusia necesitaba, parecía así, era una transformación económica completa, una industrialización capitalista básica.

Esto era uno de los motivos para el punto de vista que ellos mantenían a través de la mayoría de su historia de que la revolución en el orden del día en Rusia era una revolución burgués, y no socialista. Y tal como lo veíamos en la segunda parte de esta serie, la meta principal de esta revolución sería la de preparar el camino para el desarrollo máximo del capitalismo en Rusia.

Cuando los bolcheviques cambiaron su estrategía en abril de 1917, y se orientaron hacía una revolución de tipo obrera y al establecimiento de lo que ellos veían como la dictadura del proletariado, su dedicación a la tecnología burguesa—métodos industriales y estructura de gerencia — realmente no cambiaron. Ellos creían: 1) ya que la industria, etc., era controlada por el gobierno soviético, es decir, un estado de los obreros, ello en realidad servía los intereses de la clase obrera (y los campesinos), 2) la responsabilidad principal dentro de Rusia era la de construir el aparato industrial y la economía en general, para poder industrializar al país. Esto sembraría las bases materiales para el establecimiento del socialismo y eventualmente el comunismo.

Como resultado, ellos se dedicaron aun más a la centralización, jerarquía y disciplina de la industria capitalista, y no le pusieron atención al desarrollo de un sistema de control directo de la economía por medio de la clase obrera. De hecho, ya que la industria estaba bajo su control, lo cual ellos asumían estaba bajo el control de la clase obrera, los condujo a eliminar toda objeción a la centralización, jerarquía y dictadura administrativa que ellos pudieron haber tenido.

Campesinos, sujetados a requisiciones forzadas, se volvían en contra del régimen bolchevique.

Los bolcheviques no justificaron estos pasos únicamente mencionando la intensificación de la crisis económica y el inicio de la Guerra Civil en 1918. Ellos también abogaban, justificaban y las defendían como principio, como pasos hacia el socialismo. Una de las publicaciones teóricas de N.I. Bukharin escrito durante la Guerra Civil, *El Período de Transformación Económica*, era prácticamente un himno a la centralización. Y Bukharin era el teorético principal de los bolcheviques.

Aquí podemos ver la base directa para las metas y los métodos del programa de industrialización forzosa de Stalin. Una vez que se sabía que la ola de revoluciones después de la guerra habían sido derrotadas, y ya que la clase obrera como tal había "demostrado" que carecía del deseo revolucionario (el levantamiento de Kronstadt, la huelga general de Petrograd), parecía lógico que la tarea principal del partido era la de forzar a los obreros y a los campesinos a industrializar al país.

Basada en la tecnología burguesa y en el planeamiento centralizado, industrialización, Stalin creía, traería abundancia, las bases materiales del comunismo, así abriendo el camino para la fase siguiente de la sociedad humana. Pero con los obreros y luego los campesinos desposeídos del control sobre los medios de producción, los cultos al centralismo y a la tecnología burguesa y, tal como lo discutiremos, los métodos coercivos, los dejaron subordinados, explotados y desintegrados. Dada las asunciones de Stalin, la mayoría de las cuales fueron tomadas del bolchevismo, el resultado fue, y no pudo ser, otra cosa, una industrialización estadocapitalista.

El culto a métodos bárbaros

Un razgo adicional de la idiosincracia bolchevique era la creencia en la eficacia, y aun la necesidad, de métodos coercivos y aun brutales. Yo mencionaba esto anteriormente en el culto a la dureza, pero hay puntos adicionales que hacer.

Cuando me refería a la atracción bolchevique a los métodos coercivos, no estoy únicamente repitiendo la objeción típica burguesa del marxismo de que "el fin justifica los medios." (De hecho, los capitalistas mismos creen que el fin, por ejemplo, las ganancias, la defensa del capitalismo, justifica los medios—pero esta es una discusión muy larga para abordar acá.) Tampoco niego los métodos violentos por completo; no soy pacifista. En general, estoy de acuerdo con la concepción de Marx de que una revolución necesariamente implica violencia, pero en su mayoría esto es, y debería ser la violencia de las grandes mayorías en contra de la minoría de explotadores y sus agentes. Así pues, el problema no es la coerción/violencia en abstracto.

Me parece que dos cosas se combinan. La primera es si aquellos que recurren a medidas coercivas son concientes de que el uso de ellas implica cierto costo; que ellos pueden minar la meta que pretenden conseguir, y que hasta cierto punto, tales medidas pueden prevenir el logro de tal meta.

Lo que quiero decir es que los métodos brutos tienden a demoralizar y a deshumanizar a aquellos que los usan. Me parece que si buscamos el construir una sociedad más humana que el capitalismo, entonces, deberíamos atentar a usar métodos que son más, en vez de menos, humanos que los de los capitalistas,

El otro asunto en la cuestión del uso de métodos coercivos/violentos por revolucionarios es: ¿en contra de quién se dirigen los métodos coercivos? Si la mayoría de los obreros y otras gentes oprimidas usan violencia en contra de los capitalistas y sus seguidores, eso es una cosa. Si un grupo relativo minoritario de revolucionarios termina usando métodos brutos en contra de un gran número de obreros, etc., entonces esto es algo diferente.

Habiendo dicho todo esto, yo argüiría: 1) que los bolcheviques se inclinaban demasiado por el uso de métodos coercivos/brutos en general; 2) que ellos no parecían estar concientes de que esto iría en detrimento por lo cual ellos luchaban precisamente; y, 3) que, al menos implícitamente, estas medidas coercivas lógicamente terminarían en ser usadas en contra de miembros, aun sectores grandes, de la clase obrera, cuya vanguardia pretendían ser los bolcheviques.

Ya que esta es una acusación muy fuerte (y una acusación típicamente presentada por los oponentes del socialismo), vale la pena el mencionar algunos pasages de las obras de Lenin y de sus discursos para probarlo. Los tres que yo he decidido presentar fueron escritos o expuestos en abril y mayo de 1918. Esto tuvo lugar después de la Revolución de Octubre pero antes del inicio de la Guerra Civil (lo cual tuvo lugar en junio, 1918).

En este período, el nuevo gobierno soviético, consistiendo de los bolcheviques y los Socialistas Revolucionarios de la Izquierda, se enfrentaban con un decaimiento económico rápido y el inicio de un caos social y económico. El gobierno también recientemente había firmado el trato oneroso de Brest-Litovsk con los Poderes Centrales, el cual implicaba la pérdida de una gran parte del territorio e industria rusa. Décimos esto para poner en contexto los comentarios de Lenin así como para presentarlo de la mejor forma posible.

En "Niñería Izquierdista y la Mentalidad Pequeño-Burguesa" (Mayo 5, 1918 *Obras Coleccionadas*, Vol. 27, p. 344) Lenin escribió: "Otra cosa es que las cortes no son suficientemente firmes. En vez de sentenciar a gentes que toman sobornos a ser asesinados, ellos los sentencian a seis meses de prisión."

Aquí, Lenin está demandando que los que toman soborno sean afusilados. La pena de muerte para aquellos que toman sobornos me parece ser muy severa, especialmente ya que no es de hecho un acto de contrarrevolución.

Aun más importante, vale la pena el reconocer que a este punto en la Revolución Rusa, la toma de sobornos era endémica en la sociedad rusa. (Las prácticas comunes del tiempo de paz se habían expandido grandemente por la Guerra Mundial, la revolución y la crisis económica devastante.) El afusilar a todos aquellos que aceptaban sobornos quería decir la ejecución de un montón de gente, la mayoría de los cuales no eran contrarrevolucionarios activos o aun burgueses.

Aun más, es lógico el asumir que Lenin creía que castigos similares deberían ser aplicados a otras "gentes que impedían las medidas pasadas por los soviets." (Cita del mismo pasaj e.) Para este tiempo, los soviéts ya habían abolido el comercio privado. Pero con el deterioro de la economía, y el poco tiempo desde la toma de poder, la cadena del comercio del estado era muy nueva y extremadamente ineficiente. En realidad, prácticamente no existía. En este situación, muchos obreros y campesinos ordinarios se ocupaban del comercio privado simplemente para sobrevivir. Así pues, nosotros podemos ver que Lenin está abogando, aunque implícitamente, el tirar a un número muy grande de gente.

Quizás Lenin creía que tales medidas "firmes" terminarían con la toma de sobornos. De ser así, el estaba equivocado. En condiciones de caos y extrema esca-

(Continúa en la página 5)

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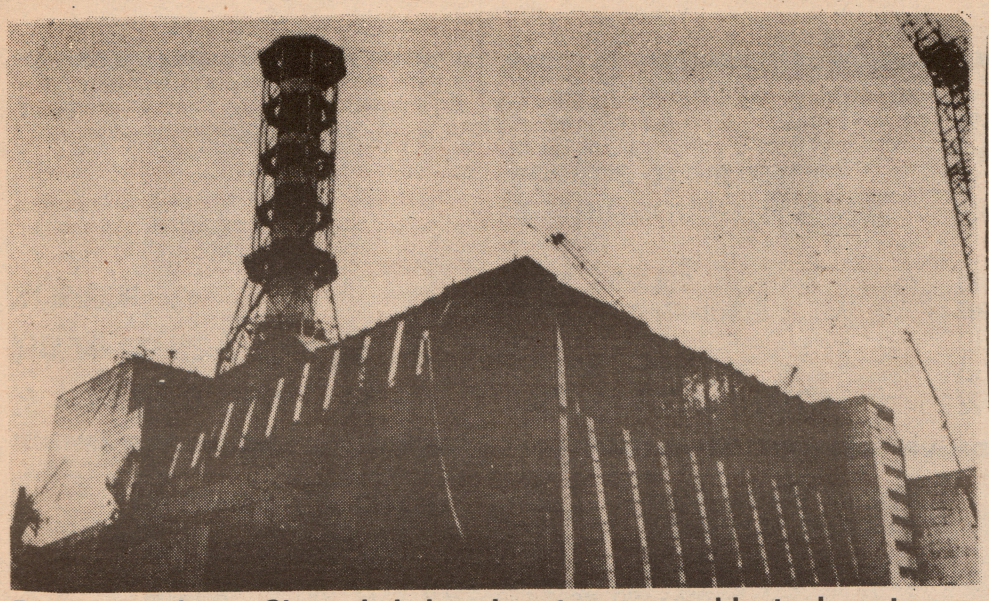

Reactor nuclear a Chernobyl el cual sostuvo un accidente desastroso en 1986. La manía de los rusos para poder nuclear viene directamente de la adoración de la tecnología por parte de los bolcheviques.

sez, la gente hará lo que tiene que hacer para poder comer y alimentar sus familias, aun si sufren el ser oprimidos y la pena máxima. Ello sucedió en Rusia.

Así, aquí vemos un ejemplo de la preferencia de Lenin por métodos bárbaros, juntamente con una creencia en su efectividad. No solamente es la selección de sus métodos excesivamente brutales, ello también implica la coerción en contra de los obreros y los campesinos, y no solamente un puñado de opresores. Aun más amedrantante, tales medidas tienen la tendencia a crear enemigos de aquellos que los usan.

Así pues en el ejemplo previo, tal como lo he indicado, la mayoría de aquellos que tomaron sobornos o que se ocuparon en la comercio privado, no eran contrarrevolucionarios. Al máximo de acuerdo a la terminología bolchevique, ellos eran únicamente contrarrevolucionarios "objetivamente."

Yo argüiría, sin embargo, que el tirar a gente dedicada a la toma de sobornos o comercio privado es a forma más segura de transformar a aquellos que todavía no han sido aprendidos como contrarrevolucionarios "subjetivos." Y esto es lo que en verdad sucedió.

Comenzando en el verano de 1918, los bolcheviques "trajeron la revolución al campo" (como ellos lo llamaban), y comenzaron la requisición forzosa del grano de los así llamados campesinos ricos y medios. Estas medidas lanzó a millones de campesinos en contra del nuevo régimen soviético, condujo a una reducción grande de la tierra cultivada en la producción de alimentos, y consecuentemente hambre, y resultó en un derramamiento de sangre en el campo.

Por supuesto, no se puede culpar a los bolcheviques únicamente por lo que pasó. Los ejércitos Blancos eran probablemente más atroces que los bolcheviques. Pero la política de los bolcheviques de tratar de suprimir todo el comercio privado compartió una gran parte de la responsabilidad por lo que pasó. Al mismo tiempo ello aseguro que la gran mayoría de los campesinos fueran, y permanecieran profundamente hóstiles al régimen bolchevique.

(La política agraria de los bolcheviques, así como otras llevadas a cabo por los bolcheviques en los primeros años de la revolución, es discutida y analizada por el disidente historiador pro Soviet, Roy Medvedev, en su publicación reciente, *La Revolución de Octubre*.)

Otro relato de las publicaciones y discursos de Lenin en este período ilustra el problema de una forma aun más clara.

En su discurso en el Soviet de Moscú de los Obreros, Campesinos y Diputados del Ejército Rojo, el 23 de abril de 1918, Lenin dijo:

> Este país, el cual el curso de la historia ha puesto en la posición delantera en la arena de la revolución mundial, un país que ha sido devastado y sangrado, se encuentra en una posición extremadamente grave y nosotros seremos aplastados si no detenemos la ruina, desorganización y confusión con una dictadura de hierro de la clase conciente de los obreros. Seremos severos para con nuestros enemigos y de *los irresolutos y de los elementos dañinos en nuestro alrededor* (énfasis nuestro) que se animan a traer desorganización en nuestro trabajo creativo difícil de construir una nueva vida para la clase obrera. (*Obras Collecionadas*, Vol. 27, p. 233.)

Hay dos puntos dignos de mencionar acá. Primero, los bolcheviques no van a ser únicamente severos en contra de sus enemigos, también lo serán en contra de los "irresolutos" y "elementos dañinos" en nuestro medio. "Irresolutos y elementos dañinos" son palabras muy amplias y en las circunstancias del tiempo, probablemente incluían a mucha gente.

Y Lenin no está amenazando (al menos implícitamente) solamente a muchos obreros y campesinos ordinarios con severidad bolchevique (probablemente ejecución), él está también amenazando a aquellos elementos dentro del *Partido Bolchevique* que no están de acuerdo con la necesidad de este tipo de severidad. Esto es en verdad la versión amplia de la demanda de Lenin de tirar a aquellos que han sido agarrados tomando sobornos y ocupados en el comercio privado.

Segundo, en este relato, Lenin defiende "la dictadura de hierro de los obreros concientes." Aquí, en la mentalidad de Lenin, la concepción de Marx de la dictadura del proletariado (la dictadura de toda, o casi toda, la clase obrera), se ha convertido en la dictadura de *parte* del proletariado, la "clase conciente" de los obreros, que son, de acuerdo a la definición de Lenin, los miembros del Partido Bolchevique.

Y la tarea de estos obreros no es únicamente la de imponer la "dictadura de hierro" sobre los enemigos de clase (capitalistas, terratenientes, oficiales tsaristas, etc.), sino que también sobre aquellos obreros que no tienen conciencia de clase, como los bolcheviques definian tal conciencia. Es decir, aquellos obreros que no están de acuerdo con lo que ellos creen. Es decir, el resto de la clase obrera.

Aquí se encuentra el esquema teorético de lo que iba a existir a finales de la Guerra Civil a principios de 1921. Para esta fecha, los bolcheviques habían impuesto la "dictadura de hierro" sobre el resto de la clase obrera, supuestamente en el interés de tal clase. Pero estos obreros no se ponían de acuerdo acerca de quién representaba su verdadero interés: en marzo de 1921, para demostrar su oposición a la severidad de los bolcheviques, ellos paralizaron a Petrogrado, la capital, con una huelga general.

(Si parece irónico que Lenin prácticamente predecía el resultado burocrático de la Guerra Civil, en realidad no lo es. El resultado en el contexto de las condiciones objetivas, se derivó lógicamente de la concepción de Lenin de conciencia y liderazgo expuesto en *¿Qué Hacer?* que la fuente de la conciencia socialista, y de que la única garantía del socialismo, es el Partido Bolchevique.)

En el relato siguiente (en breve), me gustaría citar la actitud de Lenin sobre la cuestión de métodos de una forma sucinta. También es tomado de "Niñería Izquierdista y la Mentalidad Pequeño-Burguesa."

> . . . no deberíamos temer el usar métodos bárbaros en la lucha en contra del barbarismo. (P. 340.)

Para mí, esto prácticamente resume la idea por debajo de todas la cuestiones que hemos estado discutiendo en esta parte. Desafortunadamente, ello resume mucho de lo que yo he llamado la "idiosincracia" bolchevique. Porque, me parece a mí, si uno se prepara a usar métodos bárbaros para luchar en contra del barbarismo, el resultado puede ser únicamente el barbarismo.

Conclusión

El punto principal que he tratado de establecer en esta parte de la serie sobre el leninismo es que hubo muchos aspectos del estilo y la cultura de los bolcheviques que apuntaba en la dirección del capitalismo de estado. Estas fueron tendencias que implicaban el establecimiento de una dictadura, de una élite social autoproclamada sobre los obreros y los campesinos "en el interés de" tales clases y "en el nombre de" socialismo y comunismo.

No es que condiciones objetivas no jugaron un papel en el establecimiento de tal dictadura. Esto fue muy cierto. Pero lo que los bolcheviques creían y hacían (y lo hacían agresivamente), contribuyó grandemente, en el contexto de esas condiciones, a este mismo resultado.

De una forma más concreta, si un efecto de las condiciones objetivas es el minar a las instituciones del control de los obreros sobre el estado y la economía, entonces, lo que los bolcheviques hicieron en el contexto de esas condiciones ayudó al avance de esas tendencias en vez de contenerlas.

Aun más, una vez que la dictadura del Partido Bolchevique había sido establecido, no me parece claro, aun si hubiesen habido revoluciones exitosas de los obreros en el Occidente de Europa, que los bolcheviques hubieron establecido democracia proletaria, incluyendo la legalización de otras tendencias de izquierda. Tampoco es obvio que, dada su infatuación con la centralización y el planeamiento "científico," ellos hubieran tratado de establecer control verdadero de los obreros sobre las fábricas y la economía en total. En el pasado, yo pensaba así. Ahora, no estoy seguro.

En resumen, yo creo que la idiosincracia bolchevique, y particularmente la mentalidad de Lenin, su creador y su líder principal, estaba marcada con tendencias, actitudes y concepciones que apuntaban en la dirección del capitalismo de estado. Aun si ellas no se constituyen en capitalismo de estado en su totalidad, ellas ciertamente ayudaron a sembrar las bases, y proveyeron la justificación, para la dirección que Stalin tomó después de la muerte de Lenin.

En conclusión, permítanme citar una vez más de las obras de Lenin en la primavera de 1918. (Ya hemos citado una parte de este relato.)

> Mientras que la revolución en Alemania se desarrolla de una forma muy lenta, nuestra tarea es la de estudiar el capitalismo de estado de los alemanes, no desperdiciar esfuerzo, en copiarla y no tener miedo de adoptar métodos dictatoriales para acelerar el copiarlo. Nuestra tarea es la de acelerar la copia aun más que Pedro (Tsar Pedro el Grande—RT) aceleró la adopción de la cultura occidental por una Rusia bábara, y no deberíamos tener miedo de usar métodos bárbaros en la lucha en contra del barbarismo.

Con o sin las condiciones objetivas, esto me parece a mí ser la prescripción para el capitalismo de estado.

Si le gusta a Ud. lo que tenemos que decir, pongase en contacto con nosotros:

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The Problem is Electoralism

(Continued from page 5)

Lakeshore development project. Finally he ends up embracing the Democratic Party, as he said he never would: endorsing Mondale in 1984, Jackson now, and seeking the endorsement of the Rainbow Coalition.

Another example of the corruption of "winning power" was the election of the French Socialists, led by François Mitterrand. He attempted to carry out a liberal/social democratic program (to the left of Jackson's). However, French capitalism was in recession and could not "afford" it. The French capitalists took their money out of the country and refused to invest in France. Since Mitterrand was, after all, committed to running a capitalist system, he was forced to back off: his party switched to a program of retrenchment, similar to that of Reagan and Thatcher. At the next election, the French returned the genuine conservatives. Similar lessons can be learned from the election "victories" of the Spanish Socialists or of Andreas Papandreou's social democrats in Greece.

The worst example is Chile: Salvador Allende's Socialist–Communist coalition government proposed the mildest of reforms. But they were too much for the Chilean (and U.S.) capitalists, who set off the military coup, which bleeds Chile to this day.

To repeat, capitalist democracies are not run by elections.

And the far-left socialists, the revolutionaries, in these countries? In every case, most of the far left was caught up in the mass movement, cheering for the popular candidates, and did not tell the truth about the limits of electoralism.

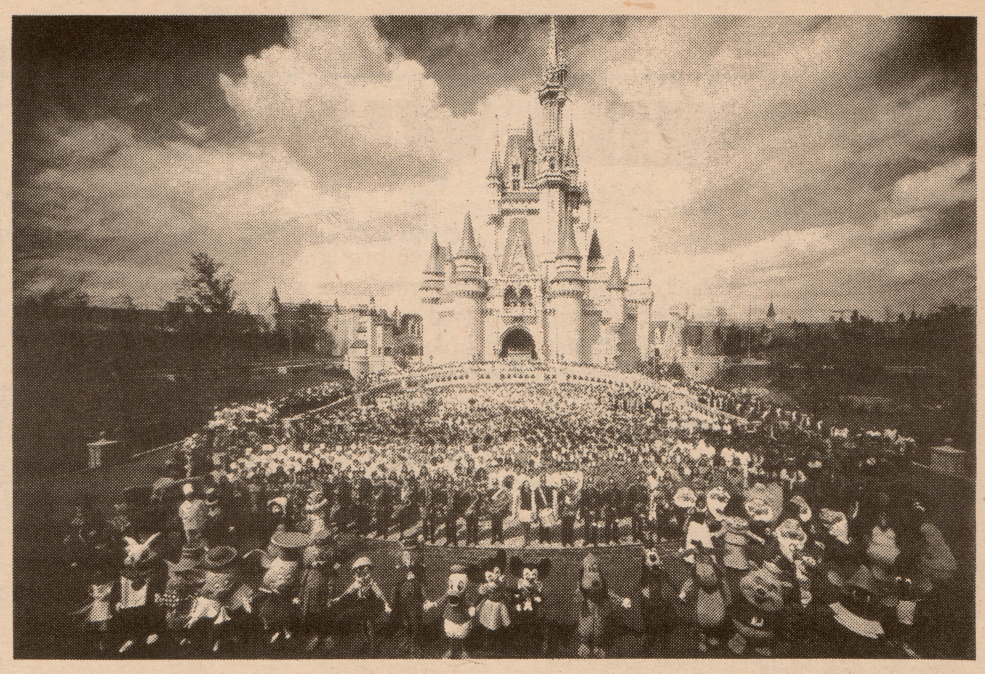
For this reason, we do not call on the Rainbow Coalition to split from the Democrats and form an independent party. We call on it to build a movement, independent of illusions in the capitalist "democratic" state.

However, if an independent party *were* formed—a Black party, "Rainbow party," Green party, Labor party—we would not necessarily oppose it; we might even participate in it. That depends on circumstances. Nor do we rule out the idea of revolutionaries running in elections, using them as one platform (among others) to raise a revolutionary program. These are *tactical* questions.

But we completely oppose the *strategy of electoralism*: the idea that liberation can be achieved by running in elections, getting elected, and managing the existing state. Even if we participated in an independent party, we would openly oppose the illusions of its leadership that by winning elections it could save the world. Like the "fundi" (fundamentalist) wing of the West German Greens, we would oppose all alliances with capitalist parties and insist on tying the organization to mass demonstrations and militant actions.

The electoralist strategy is a deadly error. At best it sets us up for a "victory" on the model of France or Chile; more likely for a defeat and a call to support the likes of Michael Dukakis. ("He is better than Bush," we will be told, and "If you supported Jackson, you can't pick up your marbles and quit when your candidate loses this round, can you?")

In any event, the job of liberatarian socialists is not to pretend that working people are close to "power" when they could not be further away. It is to participate in popular struggles while remaining in opposition to all capitalist politicians and their programs. It is to gather together those who oppose all statist solutions and are prepared to rely on popular mobilizations rather than on a bourgeois hero of the moment. □



On Jesse Jackson and *Tikkun*

(Continued from page 5)

peaceful and loving world. For that very reason, many of our readers have been attracted to the political ideals articulated by Jesse Jackson." Although I remember reading it months ago, I have not been able to find the quote Crouch refers to: "If he can't satisfy our audience. . . he is in deep trouble." What I recall that to mean was that Jackson should be able to reach the *Tikkun* audience on the issues, but because of his lack of understanding about anti-Semitism, Jackson won't be able to reach either the progressive Jewish community or the more mainstream Jewish community, not that the "pro-Israel lobby" will target Jackson for political assassination.

What follows the interview with Jackson is 10 pages of discussion with six commentators who also cover a range of approaches. David Twersky, a member of *Tikkun*'s editorial board, has a sickening approach (who is more oppressed—Blacks in South Africa or Jews in the Holocaust, blaming Jackson's candidacy for undermining the relationship between Blacks and Jews); other members of *Tikkun*'s editorial board recognize Jackson's openness to Jewish support and a sensitivity to the Jewish experience that comes out of the oppression of Blacks. Abbie Hoffman, who worked on Jackson's campaign, raises criticisms of Jackson on cultural issues (Jackson's support for mandatory drug-testing, cleaning up rock music), but more importantly criticizes his political perspective, which is highly electoral and tied to the Democratic Party with no intention of creating an independent movement.

The other thing that bothered me in Crouch's letter was the implication that Jackson's candidacy was doomed because of the pro-Israel lobby. There are powerful Jewish organizations that support Israel both by sending a lot of private money and by supporting politicians that send U.S. government dollars. There are anti-Semitic organizations that support Israel because it enables U.S. imperialism to have a strong hold on the Middle East. It is a dangerous mistake if we see everything that is Jewish as pro-Israel and everything that is pro-Israel as controlled by Jews. It is also dangerous to lay the blame for a probable Jackson defeat on the Jewish world. Not only does it foster anti-Semitism, but it forgets the strength of conservative forces, excuses the racism in the U.S. and ignores the crucial question of Jackson focusing the energy and outrage needed to make real changes into the Democratic Party.

Sincerely,
Lisa Gashen

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"WE WILL WIN!"

(Continued from page 3)

with the failure of large legal demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience to actually stop the war. People in the streets pushed past the limits of protest-as-usual to unleash what those in power fear most: the disruption of the social order at home.

Large legal demonstrations and civil disobedience have restrained U.S. military aggression, but only because they contain the threat to take things further. The response to sending troops to Honduras was, in the words of a Minneapolis member of Pledge of Resistance, "a dress rehearsal for the response to a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua." The ruling elite of the U.S. must know that if Central American villages are set afire, so too will the cities of North America burn.

By recognizing that those in power will only respond to the disruption of peace at home, the anti-war movement is acknowledging that it is fighting against a total system: the system of imperialism. We know that the war in Central America is not an accidental mistake in an otherwise decent system. The war is carried out because it is profitable for the banks and corporations that dominate our society to keep the world in poverty, and therefore to militarily crush any attempt to overthrow that system in any part of the world.

There is a new fighting spirit that has emerged in many movements: anti-racism; the homeless; and gay liberation are some of them. In all of these movements, youth have used direct action to push the struggle from protest to resistance.

These movements, along with the movement against the U.S. war in Central America, have brought many people into the street who have not previously been involved with politics. The disenfranchised people who have been in the street have much to gain by struggling against imperialism. For them, the struggle is more than just ending an unjust war in some other part of the globe. It is also ending the daily oppression that the disenfranchised face here.

The people who participated in the recent demonstrations in Minneapolis felt empowered by their ability to challenge the police at key moments and win. The presence of large numbers of fighting, disenfranchised people in the streets has disrupted the cozy relationships that the traditional peace groups have had with the police and press. These groups were forced to take sides and come out in support of the people in the street or in favor of maintaining the old arrangement.

Many groups took up the challenge in a principled way and adapted to the new terms of the struggle. There is a renewed interest in revolutionary politics throughout the movement. As people see the movement fight and win small battles, it no longer seems so absurd to talk of a revolutionary movement.

The new situation presents us with an opening. Many people are willing to push things forward. Thousands of people had the experience of taking control, if only for a short while, of the streets, of the movement and, their lives. In Minneapolis the experience of creating a "liberated zone" had a significant impact on the movement. In the future we need to look for opportunities to open up new liberated zones.

This means more than just holding a street. The squatters movement shows how creating liberated zones strengthens the fight for housing by the homeless. We need to learn how to physically defend ourselves from police attack in these situations. This means having ample supplies of protective clothing (goggles, gloves, bandanas), first aid supplies and self-defense skills as well as the strategic sense of when to fight and when to retreat.

As remarkable as the militancy of the demonstrations in Minneapolis was how the people in the streets seized control of their movement and sought to run it democratically. It is this refusal to be sheep for movement shepherds that made all the talk about "unity in our diversity" real.

Building the kind of movement that can create liberated zones, in which the people have control, means breaking out of the isolation of the anarchist milieu by building coalitions. In Minneapolis, the creation of the Coalition to Stop the War, with the very active participation of RABL, opened space for the new people in the street. All of the groups that formed the Coalition to Stop the War had worked with RABL in the past. This made them less suspicious of the new forces that RABL represented in their eyes and made it possible for large numbers of people who had not yet developed a political position to join a very broad movement. At the same time the more militant forces, knowing the cops and press would have difficulty singling them out for repression, were able to carry out some relatively audacious actions.

The essential element in the creation of a broad anti-imperialist coalition is solidarity. For the more moderate forces this means refusing to buy respectability by cooperating with the cops and the media in trying to isolate the more militant forces. For the fighting groups this means respecting the fears and concerns of the whole movement by not trying to turn every demonstration into a "fight to the finish" with the cops. For both it requires building principled unity in coalitions that recognize the diversity of the movement.

While existing peace groups will continue to attract committed individuals, we cannot rely on the relatively privileged sectors of society those organizations are generally based in. It is amongst the most disenfranchised members of this society that we will find those who have nothing to lose and everything to gain by fighting back. From all these groups, the youth — the hip-hoppers, punks and other kids who retain some will to live free after being beaten down in school, at home and on the street—were the people who pushed the anti-war movement forward.

The movement that we build in North America will be unique; we are in the heart of the beast. But our movement can learn from the fighting youth in Palestine, in South Africa and in Korea. We also have much to learn from movements in other over-industrialized countries. Class War in England, the Autonomen and Kaoten in West Germany and throughout Western Europe, the fighting anarchist youth in Poland and squatters everywhere can teach us a great deal.

We are faced with a decision. To push forward and widen the opening that now exists or to be content with things as they were. The choice is ours. ●

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CALENDAR

June 3, Friday, 7 p.m.
Bash the Rich! Protest Uptown sponsored by RABL. Lake & Hennepin, Minneapolis.

June 6, Monday, 7 p.m.
General Meeting of Twin Cities' Anarchists.
Back Room Anarchist Books
2 E. 27th St. (Just off Nicollet)
Minneapolis 870-7008

July 1-4, Fri.-Mon.
Continental Anarchist Gathering in Toronto
For further info, contact Back Room Anarchist Books, 870-7008.

July 11, Monday, 7 p.m.
General Meeting of Twin Cities' Anarchists.
Back Room Anarchist Books
2 E. 27th St. (Just off Nicollet)
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What Is RABL?

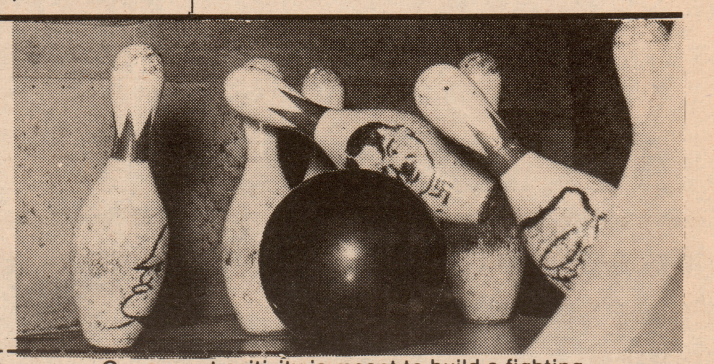
The Revolutionary Anarchist Bowling League is a Twin Cities based organization committed to building a mass revolutionary and anti-authoritarian movement, which was formed in the fall of 1987.

RABL believes that poverty, violence against womyn, imperialist war, racism, boredom, alienation and a thousand other sources of misery are the product of authoritarian relations between people. RABL seeks the overthrow of these systems through a social revolution.

Towards this end we carry out educational activity, work in solidarity with a broad range of struggles and carry out direct actions that expose and weaken existing authority.

We have participated in or organized: Takeovers of abandoned buildings by the homeless; demonstrations against contra aid; actions in solidarity with the Irish struggle, a day of direct action against sexism in media on International Womyn's Day; demonstrations in support of the Palestinian uprising; anti-fascist organizing; and many other actions.

RABL members are largely, though not exclusively, youth. We are therefore active in the high schools and in the underground music scenes.



Our current acitivity is meant to build a fighting movement that can empower people to gain control over the decisions that effect their lives. RABL seeks to create a world without bosses, rapists, landlords, politicians, cops or priests. This world can be achieved but it will not materialize before us. We must take it with both hands and grasp it tight.

We believe that such a world can only be achieved if the oppressed of the world fight for it. We know that those who benefit from the current system do not hesitate to crush any resistance to their rule.

"WE WILL WIN!"

THE revolts that broke out in response to the sending of U.S. troops to Honduras mark a new period for the anti-war movement in North America. The sustained fighting character of these demonstrations marks the emergence of a new spirit that has been building for the past few years.

Anti-war activity in North America has been dominated until recently by two approaches: large legal demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience. Both approaches contain implicit assumptions about how the war can be stopped that have stood in the way of pushing the movement forward. Legal demonstrations and civil disobedience will both remain essential tactics in the anti-war movement, but they can no longer be viewed as complete strategies in themselves.

These two approaches have succeeded in expressing the opposition of most Americans to the war. But they have failed to raise the costs. Acts of civil disobedience, particularly the Plowshares actions, have spoken to the necessity of resistance, but they have been constrained by a respect for the law that demands submission to arrest, trial and often jail. If we must take responsibility for our actions it should be before the people of the world who will die if we fail to stop the war and not before some judge in the pay of the war machine itself. To submit to arrest is to beg one more time for the warmakers to accept our petition. We know they have heard us, they have decided not to listen. They feel they have nothing to lose by ignoring us.

Now, instead of simply expressing outrage against the war, thousands of people deliberately sought to raise the costs of the war by creating civil unrest in the cities of North America. This decision reflected a fundamental frustration

(Continued on next page)

The Fighting Spirit of Youth

MILITANT demonstrations against Reagan's preparation for invasion of Nicaragua revitalized the anti-war movement in the Twin Cities. The demonstrations would have been neither militant nor massive if not for the strength of youth.

The day after the troops were sent to Honduras, word spread like wildfire through the high schools and alternative scene that there would be a demonstration Uptown, a place where many of us hang out anyway. Young people were also deciding that this protest would be different; we didn't want "another weak-ass, boring, pacifist demo."

When the demonstration started that afternoon, hundreds, mostly youth, poured into the Hennepin–Lake intersection. It was young people who first set out to protect the demonstration from the police, and insure the blockade kept. A police car was forced out of the area early when young demonstrators attempted to flip it over. Barricades were established with dumpsters, newspaper boxes, and bus benches.

One group, Anti-Racist Action, is an organization of youth which was very active in the demonstrations. Members of Anti-Racist Action raised their hands in mock Nazi salute behind a burning American flag. A photo of this appeared in newspapers all over the world. The photo distorted the intention of this act, making it seem as it those doing it were fascists when they were actually anti-fascists, mocking the police and the imperialism which the U.S. flag represents.

Later in the night when riot police massed a block away from the protest, a network of young womyn and men that broke many social barriers (including punks, hippies, skaters and skinheads), gathered and distributed rocks, glass bottles, spraypaint and bandanas to cover faces. We were ready to defend the barricades we had worked so hard to establish from the army of pigscum down the block. In the end the police backed down and confrontation wasn't necessary.

The next day in school the hottest topic of conversation was the demonstration the night before and the plans for another demo that night. Many kids who had never been involved in any kind of official protest before, started seeing that, with draft age rapidly approaching, war seemed likely.

The demonstration that evening was almost twice as big as the previous night, and once again youth played a crucial role in shaping its character. When a couple of Navy counter-protesters tried to challenge the demo, they were sent running. Cop cars were again pelted, the mood of militancy was on the increase.

When the demonstrators decided to march on a military recruiting station about a mile away, people were ready to vent their anger. And when the three-block long body of marchers reached the target, the youth in the demo tore the shit out of that imperialist butchershop. Paint bombs flew, rocks crashed through the windows, flags were burned. A youth who had become a navy reservist revolted against the life he had locked himself into, helping in the trashing. Our power was most clearly shown at the recruiting station.

In the next week youth were always at the forefront of the demonstrations. You would think that with the emergence of radical youth as an anti-war force the left/liberals would welcome us into the movement; instead they have shunned us for embarrassing their respectable organizations. As youth prepared barricades, we were scolded by older, safe peaceniks. One bastard, who had done absolutely no organizing for the demos, had the fucking nerve to accuse a group of young people of being police provocateurs, simply because the tactics we utilized violated his pacifist doctrine.

In another case some middle-class twits tried to stop some youthful protestors from spraypainting on store windows. And anti-cop, anti-racist and anti-sexist slogans instigated by youth seemed frowned upon by the "serious" demonstrators. Many grown-ups were especially displeased at the intense hate we showed at the police.

Many youth have wanted to take up anti-imperialist struggles for a long time, but have found the existing groups to be uncomfortable to be in because of ageism within the groups and a refusal to address the political concerns of youth — police harassment, the possibility of being used as cannon fodder in the next war, and other concerns.

The professional protestors were used to having cordial relations with our oppressors in blue. They haven't faced the violence and intimidation we deal with regularly from the police. When youth made the connection between the police and the war, we were far ahead of most of the peace movement. We should be proud of the advances we made, and be willing to defend our actions in the future. United we can build a movement that can use whatever means necessary to smash the war machine! ●

Minneapolis Revolts!

(Continued from previous page)
tions at Honeywell), the crowd laughed and jeered the cops.

The area was still held after four hours despite repeated police warnings. As the weather grew colder (it was still freezing out in Minnesota) the crowd began to diminish.

A second mass meeting decided to withdraw from the area and return again at 4:30 p.m. the next day. At this point the crowd marched towards the riot cops who retreated as a few rocks and bottles were thrown at them. The crowd was able to disperse into the surrounding residential area with only three arrested during the night, all youth.

Directing our anger

The next day we did it again. At 4:30 p.m. Friday, people descended on Lake and Hennepin. The media had been lying all day, telling people that WAMM was urging its members not to turn out. Many WAMM members showed up nonetheless. KFAI, a community-controlled radio station, publicized the action all day. The crowd swelled to about 1,000 as the streets were occupied a second time. The police kept their distance. At about 6:00 p.m. the crowd voted overwhelmingly to march the 13 blocks to an Armed Forces Recruiting Station on Lake St. to direct their anger at a more appropriate target.

The march filled the street for four blocks and went unmolested by the police. Once everyone was gathered at the Recruiting Station it was quickly trashed. Paint bombs and eggs were thrown. The walls were spraypainted. Finally four windows and a door were smashed in with rocks, bricks and at least one bowling ball *(STRIKE!)*. A roman candle was shot into the Recruiting Station and a flag burned by a Naval Reservist. The crowd then marched back to Lake and Hennepin.

Another mass meeting was held in the street. It was decided that tactical differences would not stand in the way of physically defending all participants in the action from arrest. The demonstration would disperse by breaking up into large groups. The next demonstration would take place Monday at 4:30 at Hennepin and Washington in downtown Minneapolis. A few hundred people marched from Lake and Hennepin to Franklin and Hennepin where they blocked traffic and then dispersed.

Seeking to explain the failure of the cops to make arrests or stop the trashing, one cop was quoted in the press as saying "the anarchists are better organized than we are." While we wished it were so, we did not let such talk lead to overconfidence as we prepared for Monday.

Over the weekend there was frantic organizing. Thousands of leaflets were printed and distributed. A Coalition to Stop the War was organized including Lesbians for Peace and Justice, the Pledge of Resistance, PSO, RABL, the Socialist Workers Party, WAMM, and the Young Socialist Alliance. The Coalition united around three principles of action: not to initiate confrontation with the police, no direct action that was not directly related to stopping the war, and no cooperation with media, police or provocateur attempts to sow divisions in the movement. It was also decided to march on the new Federal Building. This kind of unity could never have been achieved before. The experience in the streets had injected new courage into many groups.

The weekend also saw an increase in the level of repression that would become much more visible Monday. Friday night after the trashing of the Recruiting Station, an attempt was made to blow up Back Room Anarchist Books. All four gas jets on the stove were turned up full throttle and the pilot light was put out. When people returned to the Bookstore it was filled with gas that could have been ignited by a cigarette, the flick of a light switch or a frayed electric cord. On Saturday night three bullets were shot through the offices of WAMM.

The empire strikes back

On Monday, the police put it out through the media that they would come down hard on the demonstrations. Riot police were visibly deployed to protect the old Federal Building. At 4:30 p.m. people gathered at the downtown intersection, which was quickly filled. Traffic was disrupted. The demonstration started to march down Washington Ave. in the direction of the old Federal Building. A wall of riot cops blocked off Washington. The crowd made a sharp right turn towards the new Federal Building but not before the riot cops had seized the car containing the sound system and its driver.

— photo by B. Tester

At the new Federal Building people filled the street and an attempt was made to get into the building. As soon as the cops secured the building people started to break the glass in the doors. Instantly the riot cops appeared and blocked the street. People formed a line to face them. As the cops approached, people sat down. The cops were not stopped as they came in clubbing, kicking, macing and arresting people. This level of brutality was new to many of the demonstrators. Press cameras were smashed. A reporter was bitten by a police dog. Punk youth were singled out for beatings. Children and parents were arrested together. Finally people were broken up into a few groups on the sidewalk. Almost as soon as it started the police riot was over.

The separated groups were able to regroup, and stategically retreated from the area, marching down the Nicollet Mall to Peavey Plaza where another mass meeting was held. It was decided to break up and return to Peavey Plaza on Thursday at 4:30 p.m. WAMM called for a nonviolent demonstration Wednesday at Senator Dave Durenberger's office in downtown Minneapolis. Many people dispersed, but a couple hundred marched on the Courthouse to bail out our arrested sisters and brothers. After getting in the Courthouse, the demonstrators were surrounded again by riot cops who ordered them to leave and immediately descended on people, beating them and making more arrests. A glass door was smashed in at the jail by the crowd.

Later that evening, as people were getting out of hospitals and some organizers went to safe houses, the Coalition held a press conference where it denounced the police attack.

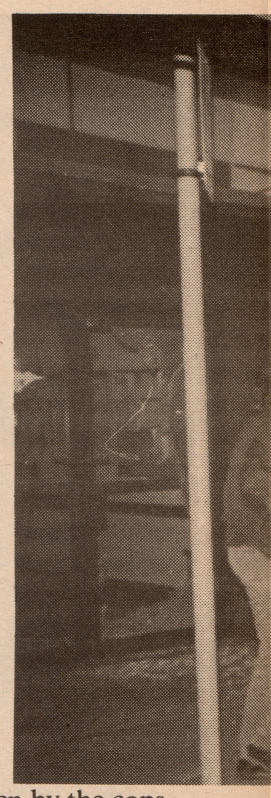
The next day WAMM withdrew official sponsorship of the Coalition on the grounds that it could not support property destruction. The press did everything it could to play up these divisions. But the Coalition meeting that night was standing room only with visible participation by the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) and other new groups.

Wednesday's WAMM demonstration drew a few hundred people on a sunny day to Durenberger's office without incident.

Keeping the ball rolling

Thursday it rained all day. As marshals gathered before the action the possibility of calling off the action if there was a small turnout was seriously discussed. Over 500 people turned out for the demonstration. Hundreds of riot cops from both Minneapolis and St. Paul were deployed within blocks of the demonstration. The demonstration reclaimed the right to take the street and marched along a winding route passing the new Federal Building, disrupting rush hour traffic throughout downtown. Throughout the march, undercover cops were exposed and chased from the crowd with chants of "The cops are contras too!"

Throughout the week the police carried out a campaign of arrests and terror against punks, skins and other youth. Youth were systematically picked up on petty charges. Others were beaten. One woman, visible during the demonstrations, had her arm broken by the cops.


Demonstrators attack the Armed Forces Recruiting Center, smashing windows with rocks, bricks, and bowling balls. Moments later, a navy mannequin was destroyed and a naval reservist burned an American flag and hurled it into the building. Similar actions occurred across the country.

On Sunday, the annual Central America Week demonstration turned out at least 2,000 people for a rally at the State Capitol in St. Paul and a march to the nearby Basilica. The demonstration occurred without incident. This marked the end of what has come to be called the uprising.

It is tempting to overstate the nature of events like the uprising, to generalize a local experience to the whole country. But we live in a period that has been characterized by public passivity in the face of ever more outrageous acts by those in power. The uprising was a major break with that passivity. For anarchists it is especially important because of the major role played by anarchists in the uprising.

As troops returned from Honduras, the attention of the Coalition to Stop the War was turned to the "humanitarian" Contra Aid bill before Congress. A number of factors contributed to a drop in the level of resistance at this point. Exhaustion and work demands after six major demonstrations in 11 days held people back. The high schools were out for Easter break, making it very difficult to reach the masses of youth who had participated the week before. Political confusion over "humanitarian" aid in the wake of the Contra-Sandinista truce immobilized many people. Finally, the mass media buried coverage of the Contra Aid bill, defusing much of the popular opposition to Contra Aid in any form. In spite of this, lively demonstrations followed both the House and Senate votes. After the House vote a demonstration marched from the ROTC Armory at the University of Minnesota to a nearby Recruitment Station which was pelted with eggs. After the Senate vote there was a rally in Loring Park in downtown Minneapolis.

The uprising transformed the anti-war movement in the Twin Cities. While the militancy of the uprising has waned, notice has been served: We will bring the war home. We are no longer content to register our opposition to the war, we are now determined to stop it. With each escalation of the war we will escalate the resistance to it. These changes have been painful for many in the movement. It is vital to respect the concerns of those who are accustomed to safer forms of protest without compromising the fighting movement that is being born. The fighting spirit of the students, youth and anarchists has broken the bounds of "protest as usual" for good. ●

FREE!

RABL ROUSER

PUBLISHED BY THE REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHIST BOWLING LEAGUE

Issue #3 June, 1988

Minneapolis Revolts!

As the bowling ball crashed through the window of the Armed Forces Recruiting Station a cheer went up. People were feeling their power in the streets. They directed their rage at targets that represented their powerlessness.

When the U.S. sent 3,200 troops to Honduras on March 16 it unleashed a new resistance to the war on Central America. Across the country people took to the streets and disrupted business as usual. In Minneapolis the level of resistance was raised sharply. The events in Minneapolis are important to the anti-war movement across the country because they are a portent of things to come if future escalations of the war occur.

On Wednesday, March 16, the Pledge of Resistance called a demonstration for the next day against Reagan's consideration of the deployment of troops. When news came that the troops were being sent, the people were already in motion organizing for a disruption of traffic at the busy intersection of Hennepin and Lake during rush hour Thursday. The action was co-sponsored by Women Against Military Madness (WAMM). Many other organizations mobilized for the action, including the Progressive Student Organization (PSO) and the Revolutionary Anarchist Bowling League (RABL).

The turnout for the action was surprisingly large with at least 500 people pouring into the intersection. The numbers of people and the level of rage made it clear this would be no ordinary demonstration. The chants were angrier than usual: "1-2-3-4, We don't want your fucking war, 5-6-7-8, Now we will retaliate"; "No War, No KKK, No Fascist USA"; and the rhythmic "U.S. out of Honduras." Cop cars were pelted with paint bombs and graffiti went up on every available surface. A U.S. flag was burned. As a crowd surrounded a police car, intent on flipping it, the police withdrew from the area. The area was declared a "liberated zone" and barricades of newspaper boxes, bus benches and burning dumpsters were dragged into the streets.

While the crowd was diverse and included the full range of anti-war groups, the decisive role of unaffiliated youth was apparent. Punks and progressive skinheads were visible as a new force, but youth, in general, turned out as a force that hasn't been seen in years. A car covered with reactionary pro-contra banners had all of its windows smashed in. It was youth who generally set up the barricades and prepared defense of the demonstration when the riot cops arrived.

The spirit of the demonstration was of festive defiance. As some people covered the barricades many danced in the street to drums, flutes and the makeshift percussion of trashcans, newspaper boxes and other found objects. As the sun set, the flames from the dumpsters illuminated the intersection as streetlights never could.

After a couple of hours, riot police amassed as a wall at the intersection of 31st St. and Hennepin Ave. With clubs, helmets, teargas and dogs, the cops ordered people to clear the area or they would "come in hard."

In a mass meeting in the street it was decided to hold the street. Rocks, bottles and sticks were gathered and the barricades fortified.

When it was overheard that the police wanted the "WAMM women" out before they moved in, WAMM members linked arms and put themselves between the main body of the demonstration and the riot cops. When the police offered to arrest those who wished to make a point "Honeywell style" (in reference to the choreographed civil disobedience ac-

(Continued on next page)

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State Terrorism in South Africa

By GUY LOUDON

In recent months, the South African government has carried out a new wave of violence and repression against the African National Congress (ANC), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), and others leading the struggle against apartheid.

In the last *Torch/La Antorcha*, Mike Everett reported the banning of 17 leading anti-apartheid groups on February 24. Both the United Democratic Front (UDF), with its 600 member organizations, and the Azanian Peoples Organization (AZAPO) are subject to the ban, which prohibits affected groups from organizing meetings, distributing literature, or criticizing the regime in any way. COSATU was ordered to cease all political activity and to limit itself to collective bargaining issues; its efforts to defend union militants now on trial or already on death row are explicitly prohibited. The bannings are calculated both to undermine resistance in the townships and to appease the growing numbers of whites supporting the neo-fascist Conservative Party, which has led to erosion of the ruling Nationalist Party's electoral base.

The treason trial of Moses Mayekiso, a Black worker and activist, reconvenes in the context of this deepening repression. As Secretary General of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) and chairperson of the Alexandra Action Committee, Mayekiso helped to link the power of the Black labor movement with struggles in the townships; if convicted, Mayekiso and his co-defendants face long prison terms. NUMSA activists complain that certain restrictions under the banning interfere with the union's ability to provide the best possible defense.

The majority of the 31 prisoners now on death row for "anti-state" activity are trade unionists. Because their "crimes" are invariably termed "political," they will now have access to fewer resources in appealing their sentences.

More recently, the regime banned all outdoor meetings for one year under the terms of the Internal Security Act. The immediate effect of this action is to expand the repression beyond leadership groups already affected by the crackdown to prevent public activity of any character.

The crackdown against the freedom movement internally has been followed by the targeting of exiled leaders of the ANC.

In Europe:

• March 29, Paris, France. Dulcie September, the ANC's representative in three countries, was found slain in her office; she had been shot repeatedly in the face and chest at point-blank range. Prior to her murder, September warned the French government that she was being followed, and that she had received death threats. Her pleas were ignored; no action was taken to insure her safety. France has not even voiced a symbolic protest with the South African embassy. (Can you imagine what would happen if a contra leader were assassinated in a Western capital?) The state was not totally inactive: riot cops *were* mobilized to beat and jail demonstrators protesting her murder.

• March, London, England. A bomb exploded in ANC headquarters, damaging the facility and narrowly missing personnel in the corridor outside. Not a murmur from the Thatcher government.

• February 4, Brussels, Belgium. Gotfrey Motsepe, ANC's representative in Belgium was shot at (the second attempt on his life), but escaped unharmed. No diplomatic actions have been taken by the Belgian government.

In Africa, the apartheid regime continues to violate the sovereignty of bordering nations:

• April 17, Maputo, Mozambique. ANC lawyer Albie Sachs was severely maimed by a car bomb. His right arm, horribly mangled by the blast, had to be amputated. Sachs also suffered injuries to his liver and lungs. One bystander was hospitalized with a fractured skull and severe brain damage. Radio Mozambique voiced the suspicion that the bomb was detonated from within the South African Trade Mission, which overlooks the scene of the bombing. Mozambican officials, furious with the latest incursion of their border by Pretoria's hit squads, denounced the apparent indifference of the Western governments.

• March 29, Gaborone, Botswana. South African commandos crossed the border and murdered four ANC "terrorists" in their sleep. In a rare move, the apartheid regime claimed responsibility.

• March 14, Maseru, Lesotho. ANC member Mazizi Maqekeza was shot to death in a hospital bed, while recovering from injuries sustained in an earlier shooting.

• January, Lusaka, Zambia. Exiled ANC Secretary General Alfred Nzo escaped injury in a bombing attempt at ANC headquarters.

• October, Harare, Zimbabwe. Exiled AZAPO activist Jeremy Brickhill sustained injuries in a car-bombing.

Pretoria's global terror activity represents an effort to neutralize the strategic leadership and international support network. The attacks have targeted high-ranking movement leaders working in exile. With the exception of Maqekeza and the Botswana victims, the targets were not involved in guerrilla/military activity; on the contrary, they are/were political operatives engaged in building international support for the liberation movement.

Pretoria's hit squads appear to have at least the tacit approval of the imperialist governments. The Thatcher government has buried an investigation which threatened to expose the involvement of British intelligence in terrorist activity against the ANC. Similarly, French observers are suggesting the complicity of the Interior Ministry in Ms. September's murder. In the U.S., the FBI is trying to exploit the rampage to its own ends. ANC supporters in several cities have been approached by agents who profess to be "concerned by rumors" that the individual contacted has been targeted; the individual is advised to "cooperate fully" (spill his/her guts) to insure his/her safety.

It would be a mistake, however, to define the liberation movement, its obstacles and possibilites solely in terms of the ANC, COSATU, UDF, etc. Although during today's lull these organizations strongly dominate whatever struggle there is, the last 12 years have shown the self-activity of workers, women and youth in the townships and on the shopfloor to be the most creative and resilient source of resistance.

The apartheid regime clearly recognizes the *mass* character of the liberation movement. The internal crackdown and global vendetta being waged against the ANC and others are, in fact, only part of a larger, comprehensive counter-insurgency program. The operations deployed under this strategy range from the cooptative "strategic hamlet" approach (see *Torch/La Antorcha*, Feb. 15, 1988) to the widespread use of vigilante terror, random prosecution, etc.

Unfortunately, these developments catch the solidarity movement here at a low point. *Torch/La Antorcha* readers may consider becoming more involved in anti-apartheid work at this critical time. Even small groups with limited resources can play a useful role in educating others and piercing the wall of silence. □

Exiled South African lawyer Albie Sachs fights to sit up after car bomb maimed him in Maputo, Mozambique, April 17.

To the Women and Men Workers of the Western Industrialized States!

Also to those sentenced to death from Sharpeville and the unemployed of the Western countries

The following is an anti-apartheid text from dissident activists in East Germany associated with East Berlin's independent Environmental Library. They've asked that the appeal be distributed to the "left and trade union press in the USA."
The Environmental Library is housed in the Zion Church. Churches in East Germany offer an umbrella of protection for dissident activities. The Environmental Library is well known and is used to put out underground publications and is an organizing base for East Germany's new left type milieu. It has suffered a police raid in which printing equipment was seized and many activists associated with it have been persecuted.

THE terrorist apartheid government in South Africa is planning the murder of six citizens who are struggling to realize their human rights. Their names are: Theresa Rameshalla, Mejalefa Reginald Sefatsa, Oupa Moses Denise, Reid Malebe Mokeena, Duma Joshua Khumele, and Francis Don Mokhesi. Their names stand for millions of other Black South Africans who are oppressed by the Botha regime.

In South Africa 4.4 million whites rule over 26.2 million Blacks. The whites, 14% of the population, own 87% of the land, while Blacks are assigned 13% of the land as "Homelands." The police and military put down strikes and demonstrations with arms. These weapons have already killed thousands of Blacks; arrests without trial are an everyday affair, and disappearances are routine.

The main support for the defense of apartheid is the economic cooperation of the Western industrial states.

The umbrella organizations of the Black revolutionaries — the ANC, the PAC, the independent unions, and the churches — have been long-time leaders of the boycott against South Africa. Oliver Tambo from the ANC says on this subject: "You have the power to stop all trade with South Africa, and you should not worry that this means that we shall go without dinner. The stomachs of the oppressed are always empty."

The governments of the Western industrialized countries do not wish to freely follow this lead. With the excuse that an economic boycott would lead to large-scale unemployment among Blacks, these governments in reality support the profit-making interests of large corporations. Such interests are realized through the exploitation of South Africa as a source of raw materials, as a market for garbage and above all as a source of cheap labor. In West Germany alone there are over 400 corporations which have subsidiaries in South Africa. This type of economic cooperation leads not only to a stronger support base for Afrikaners and to further military maneuvers by the apartheid regime against the Black population but also to the loss of jobs in your countries as factories move to foreign countries.

In order to save the lives of our six South African colleagues, in order to bring an end to apartheid, we must also take the lead with concrete actions to convince your governments to boycott South Africa economically, to end all credit and lending activities, and to break all diplomatic ties with South Africa.

We are asking this of you, because we believe that the struggles for work, peace, environmental and human rights belong together, and must be carried out with international solidarity against capitalist interests and bureaucratic dictatorship.

As you help the South Africans who are sentenced to death, you are also helping yourselves.

— Die Umwelt-Bibliothek

(Continued from previous page)
the Civil Rights/Black Liberation struggles of the late 1950s and '60s were won through "civil disobedience" (that is, law-breaking), as well as violent urban rebellions. The union drives of the '30s were won with militant strikes, including sit-ins (something which is almost never done today). The fight against the Vietnam war included mass demonstrations, civil disobedience, and violent campus rebellions, as well as a virtual mutiny in the U.S. armed forces in the field—and, of course, by the armed struggle of the Vietnamese themselves.

Another lesson of past struggles is that the movement will start off fairly moderate and reformist, but over time large sections will tend to radicalize. This was true of the Black movement which went from nonviolence to the Black Panthers, as it was true of the '60s youth/anti-war movement. Thousands of young people came to see themselves as revolutionaries. Those left organizations which had simply adapted to the early reformist consciousness were eventually left behind and distrusted.

Unfortunately, most of those revolutionaries identified with the statism of the Cuban or Chinese Stalinists. This time, instead, there are already many militants who regard themselves as anarchists or some sort of anti-authoritarians. The Revolutionary Socialist League believes these radicals are correct on the key issue of opposition to left-wing statism (of the Stalinist or social-democratic variety). We seek to cohere an anti-authoritarian wing of the developing movement. This cannot be done with an electoralist orientation.

In any case, *the truth must be told!* There is no point in being a revolutionary socialist only to tell flattering falsehoods to working people. Those who really believe in Jackson should support him; for us it would be cynical hypocrisy.

Many leftists are living in a dream world. Anne Braden writes: "We are talking about winning. We are aiming for a first ballot nomination in Atlanta in July — and this is indeed possible." (*Guardian*, Feb. 10, 1988.) She obviously has illusions in the capitalist system, particularly in the racist Democratic Party.

She goes on to criticize those who believe that "power corrupts." Well, abstract "power" may not corrupt, but it is corrupting to run to win in U.S. elections (as opposed to using elections as a platform to educate people). The consciousness of most U.S. citizens is deeply affected by patriotic chauvinism, racism, sexism, and illusions in the system. To try to win enough votes to win an election sets distinct limits (in this period at least) on how far outside the current consensus Jackson can go. And Jackson's support for U.S. capitalism and nationalism show that he really has no intention of going all that far.

It is further corrupting to go through the election mechanisms of the Democratic Party, the state-run primaries, and the media. They function to prevent real issues from being discussed. Most corrupting of all for an idealist politician is to be elected! Jackson sincerely wants to run this government, to manage the bureaucratic-military imperialist state machine for the good of all. It cannot be

done. From the time of the "Founding Fathers" to today, this state has been consciously designed to serve the interests of the wealthy and powerful. To sincerely try to run the state means to end up serving its purposes and not your own.

It was corrupting for Bernie Sanders to run to win in Burlington, Vermont. In order to win he had to promise raises for the cops. To run the capitalist city government, he pushed the pro-business

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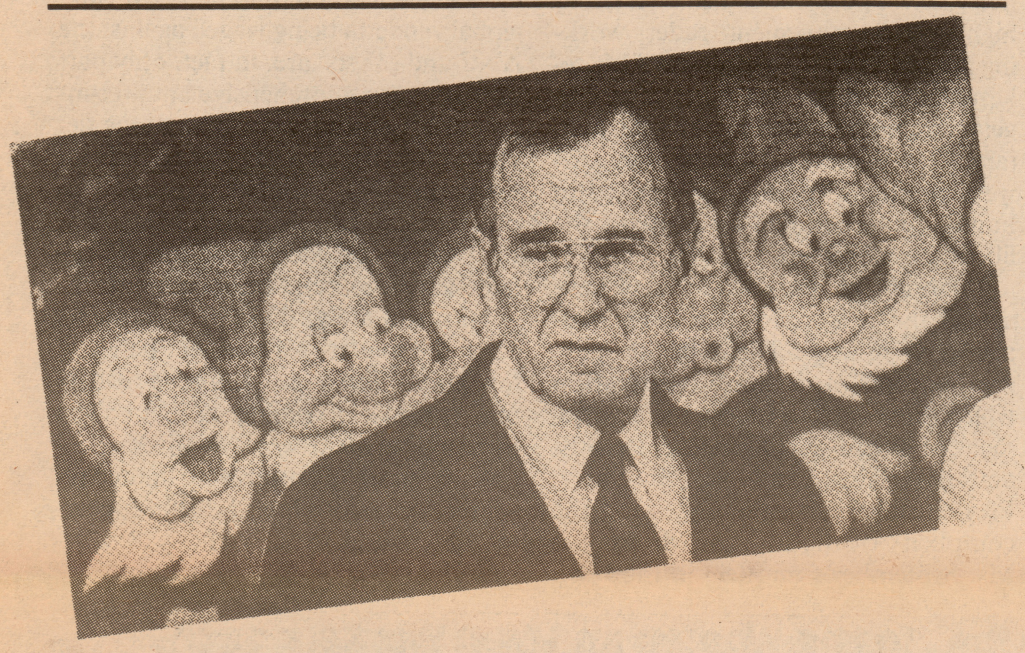

Orwellian Plebiscite

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farmers, factory workers, Black youth, Native Americans and poor people throughout the world. The set-up of U.S. marines in Lebanon, the conquest of Grenada, the mining of Managua harbor, the Iran–Contra weapons swindle and all the on-going CIA conspiracies, show Reagan's advisors to be arrogant, fascistic lawbreakers, willing to deal with the worst kind of criminals to satisfy the global ambitions of U.S. and multinational corporations.

The recent Reagan–Gorbachev "Summit Meeting" was only a p.r. deception to soothe the growing world peace movement into a false complacency. Whatever money is saved from scrapping short range missiles will be diverted into "star wars" technology—to keep the weapons producers supplied with government contracts.

Historically, the bare bones survival of democracy has been achieved by continued muckraking and the people's demand for reform through reasonably honest elections in which politicians were obliged to prove themselves to a skeptical citizenry. Television has drastically altered that tradition. TV news is almost totally devoid of meaningful reportage because that is the policy dictated by media corporation executives. Thus, Jesse Jackson, who might be a truly democratic President, will be presented on TV more as a Black personality than as a serious candidate; and with that kind of coverage the only way he could capture the Democratic nomination would be if the Party hierarchy decided to *lose* the election. There can be little doubt that the 1988 elections will be merely another corporate advertising fraud, denying U.S. voters even the slightest chance of deciding who governs them and how.

Legislation should be introduced in Congress to prohibit any and all corporate entities from interfering with the citizen's right to whatever information is necessary to independently judge each candidate's qualifications throughout the nominations and political campaigns until the last vote is cast and counted. Only one poll is legally valid—the election itself. Then, to encourage our Congresspersons to serve the people's interests, everyone who cares about freedom and sanity should help organize a nationwide boycott of the 1988 elections, including letter campaigns, demonstrations, etc., and *file suit* to have such a bogus election declared invalid. Without a major effort we will soon discover that the Democrats are learning all the wrong lessons from the Republicans and whoever "wins," that person will be nothing more than a creature of media hype and corporate deception. The reality is that we need to consider the probability that the entire social structure is operating in violation of the Constitution. □

On Jesse Jackson and *Tikkun*

Dear Torch/La Antorcha,

As a long time *Torch/La Antorcha* supporter and a subscriber to *Tikkun* magazine, I am writing to comment on Claire H. Crouch's letter in the January issue. Several parts of the letter disturbed me: the first was the characterization of *Tikkun*'s audience as "the pro-Israel lobby."

Tikkun calls itself a critique of politics, culture and society. I originally received a subscription as part of my membership with New Jewish Agenda (NJA), a progressive, socially-conscious and activist-oriented organization. As a Jewish organization it has a lot of difficulty with Israel and Palestinian liberation, but consistently and publicly it has been a voice of opposition to the worst of Israeli policy, often working with Arab groups, condemning the assassination of Odeh, demonstrating against Israeli policy in Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza. Many NJA members worked in Jackson's campaign.

Tikkun means "to heal, repair and transform the world." As a magazine, *Tikkun*'s tone is one of struggling to redefine a Jewish morality, looking both to Jewish religious/cultural tradition and to progressive political experiences of the '60s and '70s. It tries to stand in contrast to the "looking out for number one" morality of the '80s that is prevalent not only among Jews but among every other sector of U.S. society, beginning with the U.S. ruling class.

For years, to be a Jew and not give wholehearted support to Israel put one on the outside of the mainstream Jewish community. In my family, which did not see Israel as the focus of modern Jewish life and prided itself on being liberal, questioning Israel or mentioning the rights of Palestinians unleashed rage, the accusation of being both anti-Semitic and ungrateful. There was not one member of either my mother's or father's family to survive the Holocaust. That loss, the shame that comes with not being able to protect one's own, and a ton of political propaganda have clouded the minds of an entire generation of Jews. Even my grandfather, the Wobbly who refused to serve in the imperialist World War I, accepted Israel. To them, Jewish survival and Israel have become one and the same. I write this to try to give an impression of how difficult it is to see something that is so clear. I am anti-Zionist, against a Jewish state, well aware of the deal between the Zionists and imperialism, outraged at the death and destruction unleashed on the Palestinians, inspired by Palestinian tenacity, dedication to revolution and angry at how Jews are used and have let themselves be used. Without being a revolutionary, I would not have had the insight or strength to work through what is going on in the Middle East.

The opinions that I have encountered in the NJA and *Tikkun* are diverse, ranging from criticism of Israeli policy with a longing for a Jewish homeland that is just, to views close to my own. In spite of their weaknesses, *Tikkun* and NJA represent a significant break from the knee-jerk support of Israel as well as a Jewish voice in the progressive community. There is something here that did not exist 10 years ago. Crouch's definition of *Tikkun*'s audience as "the pro-Israeli lobby" is plain wrong.

In the introduction to a nine-page interview with Jesse Jackson, Michael Lerner, the editor of *Tikkun* magazine states, "As liberals and progressives, people in the *Tikkun* commmunity rightly resist the tendency within the Jewish world to reduce all political issues to 'Is it good for the Jews?' Indeed, we maintain that what is best for the Jews is a larger social transformation that would create a more just,

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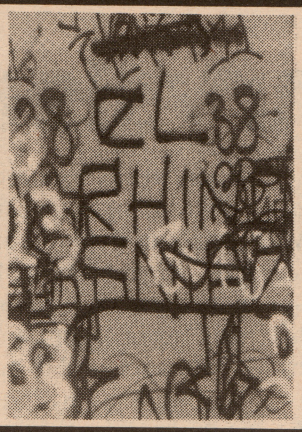
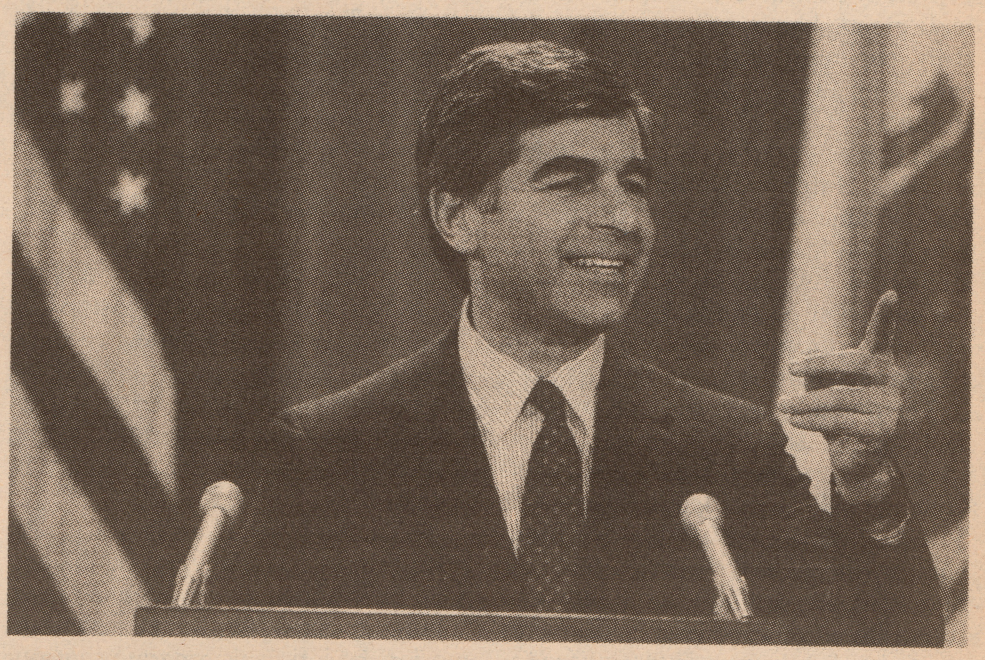


Below are three articles about the 1988 U.S. presidential elections and some related issues. "The Problem is Electoralism: A Libertarian Socialist View," by Wayne Price, a frequent writer for the *Torch/La Antorcha*, was written as a contribution to a discussion of the elections in *Against the Current*, a magazine sponsored by the organization Solidarity. "Another Orwellian Plebiscite" was sent in by a reader otherwise unknown to us. Finally, there is a letter from a Detroit RSL supporter in response to a letter that appeared in our January 15–February 14 issue.

The Problem is Electoralism



By WAYNE PRICE

THE PROBLEM with Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow Coalition is not simply their participation in the Democratic Party. It is the orientation to electoralism as such. Jackson believes that the main way to advance the movement is to run in elections, get elected to office and do the best job he can to manage this government. All of which is very unlikely to work. This country is not run by elections.

The movement around the Jackson candidacy is exciting to see: a Black-led movement, calling for alliances with other oppressed groups and causes, raising programs to the left of the Reagan/Democratic Party consensus. As such, it is one part (certainly not the only one) of the upsurge in popular struggle. That it begins with reformist leadership is only to be expected.

The limitations are also well known to readers of *Against the Current*. Despite attempts to build an organization, the campaign remains a star vehicle, in the style of U.S. electoral campaigns. Jackson's program is mildly liberal, completely inadequate to the crisis this society is facing. Jackson is a strong supporter of capitalism who believes that more Black-owned businesses will significantly help Black people. His history of personal opportunism is well known (especially in Chicago). He has let slip moderately anti-Semitic statements; among other effects, these remarks hurt the cause of Palestinian liberation. His actual goal is make himself a power broker, respected by the establishment; he sincerely believes, no doubt, that this will further the interests of Black people and other working people.

The electoral strategy is elitist through and through. A movement is organized whose aim is to put one person into office. He or she will then "represent" us, will be political *for* us, will be our savior. Because Jackson is a liberal elitist, he chooses to build an electoral movement — as opposed to community or workplace organizing or focusing on direct action. Because he is a liberal elitist, he chooses to work within the Democratic Party. This is not a tactical maneuver for him, anymore than it is for the establishment Black politicians who now endorse him. Deliberately or not, he works to channel Black unrest into the dead-end of the Democratic Party. He works to persuade all those discontented with the society to trust the political representatives of the capitalist class. The rest of the Democrats are turning rightward, something which antagonizes many poor and working people and liberals in general. Jackson says to these folks, do not be disillusioned with the Democratic Party, there is still reason to stick with these politicians of the rich.

From the viewpoint of revolutionary libertarian socialism, as understood by the Revolutionary Socialist League, we can respect those who support Jackson. There is certainly no value in "denouncing" those militants with whom we have differences in strategy. We should honestly and openly discuss our disagreements while looking for ways to participate with them in the broader movement.

There is no need, however, to join the Jackson campaign. There is no lack of non-electoral issues to participate in: campaigns around police brutality, racist violence, public discrimination, the appearance of neo-nazis or the Klan, investments in apartheid, etc., etc. As I write, recently in the New York City region, there is the Brawley rape case, the aftermath of the Howard Beach attacks, incidents of police brutality, and so on. None of the actions around these issues has involved electoral activity. The "Days of Rage," organized by Black militants, involved aggressive demonstrations and direct actions (shutting down parts of the subways, for example).

It has been our experience that people respond positively to an anti-electoral argument: "We should not trust any of the politicians or parties. We would do better to rely on joint strikes, demonstrations, civil disobedience, and other signs of real power. We should build a coalition which would be able to strike and act together." Working people may not agree with us, but they respect our views as not being so unreasonable.

In fact, few gains for an oppressed group were ever won primarily through electoral activity. The relative gains of

(Continued on next page)

Another Orwellian Plebiscite?

By ROSURTHIAN

THE APPROACH OF THE 1988 elections reminds us to expect the same sort of performance we saw in '80 and '84 that brought and returned Ronald Reagan to the Presidency. Beginning with the Eisenhower–Stevenson campaigns, political candidates have been packaged inside advertising strategies using television as the main selling tool. Presidential electioneering has thus degenerated into a popularity contest, during which the media corporations brazenly interfere in the democratic process by nullifying the issues in favor of a sports psychology, usurping the election itself with "opinion polls," "straw polls," "exit polls," etc., also run by private corporations and publicly declaring the winner hours before the people have finished voting.

In '80 and '84 thousands of voters on the West Coast were discouraged from bothering to go to their local polling places, since TV news reporters had already projected a Reagan victory. Add all this to the apathy that already keeps 50% of registered voters away from the national elections and the result is that a candidate's ability to govern is no longer relevant to his or her victory or defeat. Reagan, the actor, appears on television as a good-natured, confident, reassuring and commanding grandfather, walking tall to fight the "evil empire" for our security and national honor. The fact that he is ignorant, insensitive, short-sighted and a persistent liar is lost in the TV imagery. The German people had a similar relationship with Adolph Hitler and, like him, Reagan needs constant surpervision to keep him from fantasizing publicly; but the Nazis had only radio, newspapers and mass meetings.

Today, modern propaganda machines are techno-sophisticated, using computerized marketing techniques, including "hidden persuaders" that control the minds of those millions of TV viewers whose brains have already been malnourished by years of processed junk food, escapist melodrama and meaningless comedy. Thus, for nearly eight years we have been deliberately misgoverned and lied to by a voluntary biorobot who, fortunately for us, is rather badly managed by his advisor-programmers. Nevertheless, their long-range policy is to erase 50 years of hard won social democracy and force upon us extreme divisions of class, race and sex and a rabid, blundering "anti-communism" that projects the arms race into the orbital space of our endangered planet.

During its two terms in office the Reagan Administration has already weakened the laws that protect the poor, minorities, the environment and encouraged unrestrained corporate rip-offs, inflicting needless suffering on several million innocent people, including family

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Mike's Spirits Lifted

Rank and File Ferment in Chrysler

By MIKE EVERETT

A proposed Chrysler/UAW labor agreement nearly went down to defeat in voting May 11. The contract was similar to those that passed easily at GM and Ford in the fall. Union-wide, 46% voted "No." The contract was approved by comfortable margins at three large plants. However, according to the daily (capitalist) Detroit Free Press, results from 18 other locals had the pact losing 51.1% to 48.9%. Plants whose workforces voted to reject included Sterling Heights Stamping, Mound Road Engine, and Jefferson Avenue Assembly, all in the Detroit area. In St. Louis, two assembly plants voted "No" and Belvedere Assembly did likewise. At Warren Stamping, where I work, it passed by a bare 11 votes, 965 to 954.

The question of money was a major factor in the large "No" vote. The contract contained no percentage wage increases, only a ratification bonus of $1,000 (before taxes), plus two lump sum payments in October of this year and 1989. According to company and union literature, these last two payments are to be slightly over $1,000 apiece for the "average worker." The catch is—the "average worker" is one who worked all year, passed on vacation time, and worked a moderate amount of overtime. Workers spending time on layoff or medical leave, or who exercise their full vacation rights, or manage to work a consistent 40-hour week, will get less. In addition, Chrysler workers will be denied part of their cost-of-living allowance money until GM and Ford workers, who lag 15 cents an hour behind, catch up. This shit was put to people only weeks after the corporation announced that its top five officers received a total of $32,250,376 in salaries and bonuses in 1987.

'Job security' hoax

Chrysler workers also didn't buy the job security rhetoric, they have seen GM continue to destroy jobs under a similar agreement. The contract finalized the acceptance by the UAW leadership of Chrysler's axing of four parts plants and former AMC facilities in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

The union bureaucrats tried to make people think the money was significant. They ballyhooed a new anemic profit-sharing scheme. They touted new funding for the job bank program, but our own experience with this program is that workers brought back from layoff are being temporarily maintained at reduced benefits and rights, while the ongoing introduction of new technology is leading to an eventual loss of the majority of unskilled press operator positions in the plant. In short, along with some tuition assistance plans, the job bank is a social engineering scheme to soften the body blow of significant job losses in the city and avoid possible flare-ups at unemployment offices.

There was also a negative side to some of the "No" vote. Many "No" voters see former AMC workers as potential enemies in the scramble for a shrinking pie. Some areas of high resistance to the contract also stopped moves to give seniority to AMC workers and bring them fully under our contract.

Vote is opportunity to prepare for future

Overall, the near overturn of this early reopening of the contract (it wasn't due to expire until September 14) was a victory. The bureaucracy had been smug and confident in the wake of the Ford and GM votes. They used these "Yes" votes to attack oppositionists on the shop floor and in their own apparatus. Already today, as I write this, the newspapers are carrying coverage on how union and management figures are worried about their drive to gain Japanese-style reorganization of the work process in the upcoming round of local supplement negotiations.

Militants need to agitate during these local negotiations and future union elections. Increased organization and education amongst dissident sections of the rank and file are needed, for now they are nonexistent. Narrow losses, like the vote on May 11, can be victories, steady advances toward the goal of a real working class fight. During the events around the contract, dissatisfied workers talked about a hell of a lot: Poland, Korea, South Africa, why they are fighting and why we are not. Workers talked about what can be learned from these struggles. Militants addressed large numbers around the issues of the contract, which upset union officials. And more advanced revolutionary ideas were discussed not by the usual isolated ones and twos, but in groups of four and five. Hopefully a significant layer of Chrysler's 66,000 workers can push forward in the days and years ahead. A minority can set things in motion. These past days, these small events lifted my spirits in a work environment designed to crush them. □

Crisis Brews in Nicaragua

By RON TABER

WHILE the Sandinista strategy to divide and defeat the contra insurgency appears to be succeeding, a dreadful economic crisis inside the country is impelling workers and other oppressed people into struggle against the Sandinista regime.

On the evening of March 23, leaders of the Sandinistas and the contra counter-revolution signed a cease-fire and agreed to open up negotiations aimed at achieving a political settlement. The contra leadership, feeling that the insurgency had been effectively abandoned by the U.S. ruling class, decided that the only feasible course left was to try to cut a deal with their enemies. Whatever the Sandinistas' original intent, their decision to accept the cease-fire and engage in (and stall) negotiations with the contras has resulted in bitter in-fighting among the contras that may well lead to a split and their collapse as a meaningful military force.

Beyond personal rivalries, the issues in dispute are not clear. From accounts in the capitalist press, it seems that the extreme right-winger in the contra leadership (and the CIA's main man) Adolfo Calero, thinks the contras should play for time in the negotiations. He would bank on a Republican victory in the November U.S. presidential elections, which, he hopes, would lead to renewed military aid and a resumption of the insurgency. Other, more moderate contra leaders, such as Alfredo César, want to pursue a more serious negotiating strategy.

In an effort to increase his leverage, Calero appears to have supported contra field commanders who are hostile to the chief military leader, Enrique Bermudez. They charge Bermudez with providing poor leadership, as well as being corrupt (both undoubtedly true). Just this past week, a key contra field commander mutinied with approximately 2,000 troops at a contra camp at José de Yamales, in Honduras, 20 miles from the Nicaraguan border, in an effort to overthrow Bermudez and his cronies.

A collapse of the contra insurgency, which was organized by the CIA in 1982, can only be welcomed. It would represent a tremendous defeat for U.S. imperialism and a victory for the Nicaraguan people.

Equally important, it will, hopefully, open up the class struggle within Nicaragua itself. As a result of the long war, the economic embargo of Nicaragua by the U.S., as well as Sandinista mismanagement, the Nicaraguan economy is a mess. Inflation is rampant and there are severe shortages of basic necessities. Like ruling elites everywhere, the Sandinistas have sought to deal with these problems by attacking even further the living standards of the working class and peasants. This culminated in a drastic devaluation of the Nicaraguan currency which raised prices even further.

One unfortunate result of all this is to have built a popular base for the conservative bourgeois opposition forces within the country. Seizing the opportunity of a political opening offered by the Sandinistas as part of the regional peace treaty signed last year, 14 opposition parties have formed a united front that includes right-wing businesspersons as well as more moderate forces. It also includes the Moscow-oriented Socialist Party of Nicaragua and a semi-Maoist group, the Communist Party of Nicaragua!

Sandinista police arrest striking construction workers in Managua.

But the real threat to the Sandinistas comes from the workers and other poor people, who are beginning to struggle for their rights and needs. In March, construction workers and others struck to protest wage cuts. The Sandinistas fired the construction workers en masse and have assaulted their demonstrations.

Aside from the horrors of war, economic crisis and political repression, probably the greatest tragedy of the situation in Nicaragua is that the main result of U.S. policy and the actions of the Sandinistas is to have turned an unknowable number of Nicaraguan workers and other poor people into supporters of the right-wing capitalists, who are the ones ultimately responsible for the disastrous situation in which they find themselves. □

LETTERS

WRITE TO: GPO BOX 1288, NEW YORK, NY 10116

'B'ack to 'B'ob

This letter was written in response to the cartoon that appeared on page 12 of the last issue of the Torch (March 15–May 14).

Dear "B"ob,

Just wanted you to know that your work does not go unappreciated! I am a senior here at Adelphi University in Garden City, Long Island. As graduation approaches (May) I find your arguments more and more realized as I question my "scool knowledge." "Scool" is an exercise in "memorization and regurgitation" where students are encouraged (indeed, expected) to memorize isolated facts, spit them out, and forget them. We learn our "lessons of power"—"Do as you're told! The teacher (authority figure) is always right," etc. One of my first school memories is my first grade teacher yelling at me because I already knew how to read. "You'll learn it again!" She thought I was being a little wise-ass but actually I was just this little inquisitive kid. Isn't the question "WHY?" the basis of all knowledge? Isn't questioning a sign of intelligent curiosity? Then why is the answer to "WHY?" always something like "Because you have to learn it to get ahead" (school authority), "Because it's the law" (police authority)? Is it any wonder that our society is made up of a bunch of babbling idiot authority figures who value *rhetoric* over knowledge (just look at Reagan!)?

Anyway—I'm curious—you present good arguments against scool—but you don't really go into what is *your idea* of a good education? How can it be realized? If the whole traditional idea of education is thrown out, what do you suggest is a viable alternative? Please write back and explain—I look forward to hearing from U.

KEEP THINKING—

Alicia
West Hempstead, NY

P.S. Oh the most important thing! I had the flyer xeroxed and distributed it everywhere at Adelphi—particularly *education* teachers' mailboxes.

AIDS Unit *Now!* Says ACT UP

Sixty people demonstrated April 30 in front of Los Angeles County Hospital as part of a week-long series of AIDS Actions, sponsored locally by ACT UP/LA. Similar protests, on a variety of AIDS-related issues, took place in many other cities during the week. Following the April 30 picket, protesters entered the hospital lobby and briefly sat-in to dramatize their anger. Three people were arrested. The text of a leaflet handed out at the protest is reprinted below.

What We Want:

Establishment of a dedicated AIDS-unit at LAC/USC Medical Center.

• Currently people with ARC (AIDS Related Complex) and AIDS are scattered throughout the hospital, based on their current opportunistic infection.

• Benefits of an AIDS unit

-Physicians, nurses and staff members could be educated to be more sensitive to the needs of persons with AIDS under their care.

-Patient morale and emotional support would be enhanced.

-Patients requiring re-admission would already be familiar with the environment.

-Community AIDS support groups, such as APLA and Shanti, could concentrate their energies on just one unit.

LAC/USC cooperation with bonafide AIDS support groups to improve the quality of life for persons with AIDS at the hospital.

• Until recently anti-Gay "change" ministries, which can cause dying patients great distress, were given more access to people with AIDS than Gay-affirming volunteers.

• Full hospital administration cooperation with bonafide AIDS support groups is essential to improve the quality of life for persons with AIDS at LAC/USC.

• Establishment of an AIDS unit would be the first step in this direction, centralizing potential clients who may need support.

Upsurge in Poland

(Continued from page 1)
ing no higher than 37% was announced.

First responses

On April 25, the trolley and bus drivers of Bydgoscsz and Inowroclaw walked out, shutting down transportation in those cities. The government gave in and granted them raises of 63%. The strikes soon spread, most notably to the Nowa Huta and Stalowa Wola steel mills. The Stalowa Wola workers accepted a pay raise offer and returned to work.

But at the Lenin Mill at Nowa Huta, 17,000 of the mill's 30,000 workers continued to occupy the plant, demanding a 50% pay raise for themselves, a doubling of a recent nationwide pay raise for industrial and health workers, teachers and retirees, and the reinstatement of Solidarność activists fired from the mill in 1981. It was then that the shipyard workers in Gdańsk went out in support of their sisters and brothers at Nowa Huta. On May 5, at 2 a.m., percussion bombs were fired into the Nowa Huta mill and helicopter troops landed, beating workers and ending the strike.

Workers at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdańsk demanded not only raises but the recognition of Solidarność as a union. Since 1981, Solidarność has functioned illegally, and in recent years it has been as much a political underground organization as a union.

Young workers take the lead

The backbone of the strike in Gdańsk was apparently provided by people in their early and mid-20s, who were not actually active as adults in the heady days of Solidarność eight years ago. In fact, there seems to have been a fatal division of the shipyard workers into young people supporting the strike wholeheartedly and workers 10 years older and up, who, while not wanting to criticize the strike or side with the government, were unconvinced that this was the time or place to make a stand.

The government was able to surround the shipyard and cut off supplies of food. About 6,500 sit-in strikers left the premises individually, leaving only about 500 holding the yard. There was little response to a call on Monday, May 9, for other factories to strike in support. Nevertheless, the strikers rejected a government offer that day. But on Tuesday, the strike committee voted 10–2 to end the occupation without either accepting a compromise or winning a victory.

Throughout, Solidarność's official leadership reflected the ambivalence of the older group of workers about the strike, at one point negotiating with the government and accepting an offer later rejected by the strikers. And the Catholic Church moved quickly to try to get the powerful role of mediator between the workers and the government.

'Polish society has come alive'

For the moment, the advantage is with the government, but ground has been gained. Just weeks ago, the government called Solidarność a phantom existing only in the minds of Western propagandists. Now they have openly bargained with it in an attempt to sue for peace with the workers.

"Our strike is an important moment in the cause of restoring the awareness that it is necessary to fight in order to win," said the statement released by the Lenin Shipyard workers as they marched out. "We won the priceless thing: after years of fear, passiveness and feeling of hopelessness, Polish society has come alive."□

About 300 pickets gathered at the Polish Consulate in New York on April 30 to support striking Polish workers. Supporters of Neither East Nor West, with black banner, are visible in photo to left of Afghans.

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TORCH

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Upsurge in Poland

By WILLIAM FALK

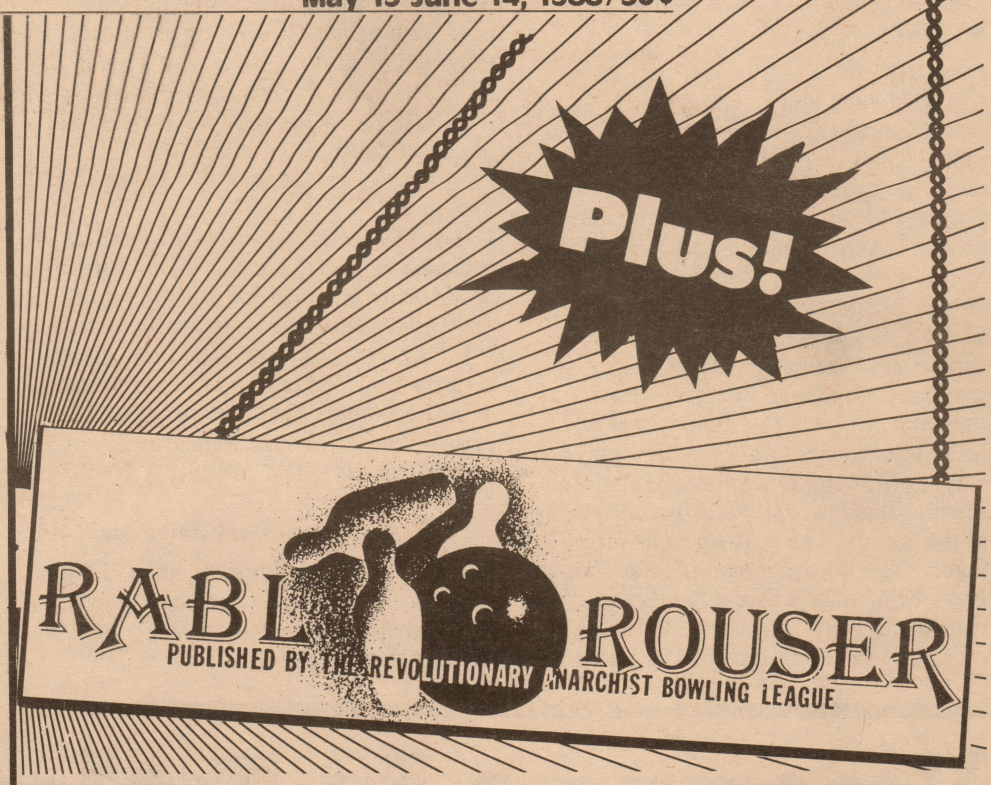
A procession of about 500 strikers out of the Lenin Shipyard in Gdańsk on May 11 seems to be the end of a 2 1/2-week-long round of battle between the Polish people and the Soviet-supported government that rules Poland. The strikers left the shipyard, the birthplace of the Solidarność union in 1980, without gaining any of their demands, but with their strike organization intact and without arrests or injuries. The procession out, in other words, marks the end of this strike wave and the beginning of preparation for new ones.

The Gdańsk action was preceded by strikes in dozens of Polish cities. The strikes were in response to an austerity plan by the government to raise capital and rebuild the Polish economy. A key element of this is removal of subsidies that keep the prices of basic living needs low and a turn to more "free market" type economic controls. In other words, a Polish version of Reagan/Thatcher economics. Both the Soviet Union and Western bankers with financial relations with Poland favor such a plan. On February 1 and April 1, prices on the most important goods were raised from 40 to 400%, while a policy of wage raises go-

(Continued on page 2)

SECCION EN ESPANOL

Plus!



After the U.S. sent troops to Honduras last March, demonstrations broke out in many cities. The most sustained, militant demonstrations took place in Minneapolis. Inside this issue of the **Torch/La Antorcha** is a special edition of the publication of one of the groups at the heart of organizing those demonstrations, the Revolutionary Anarchist Bowling League. RABL members report on the events, the moods and the meaning of the week Minneapolis revolted.

'Young people were deciding we didn't want another weak-ass, boring, pacifist demo. . .'

'As the sun set, the flames from the dumpsters illuminated the intersection as the street lights never could. . .'

'As people see the movement fight and win small battles, it no longer seems so absurd to talk of a revolutionary movement.'

Special Supplement begins after page 6.

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